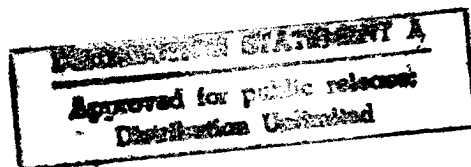


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JPRS-LAM-84-061

17 May 1984



Latin America Report

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17 May 1984

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RISE IN ELECTRICITY RATES SHOWS NEED FOR CONSERVATION

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 23 Mar 84 p 1

[Text] The ravages of inflation, coupled with the recent devaluation of the Guyana dollar, have dictated that Guyanese must pay more for services based on imported commodities.

It was no surprise, therefore, when Finance and Economic Planning Minister, Cde. Carl Greenidge, met yesterday with members of the Electricity Consumers' Consultative Committee and indicated that there would be a rise in rates for electricity supplied by the Guyana Electricity Corporation.

Cde. Greenidge explained that the rise was unavoidable, as the GEC must now pay more for fuel, spares and services from overseas.

At the meeting were top officials of the GEC, and members of the Committee included representatives from the Guyana Manufacturers' Association, the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor and City Council and the People's Progressive Party.

Now, more than ever, there is need for consumers to look seriously at alternative sources of energy, wherever possible, and at conserving power.

Many businesses and private individuals have turned to cooking with charcoal and the time is not far away when some enterprising Guyanese will design a wood-burning stove and provide wood for fueling it.

Of course wood-burning stoves were used here when Guyanese were less sophisticated. Remember the sturdy Dover stoves, with six or more burners and an oven, complete with a chimney rising through the roof?

And there is that senior Government official, who has a windmill in his yard, supplying a considerable part of his domestic power.

A consumer using an electric range today, without weighing the cost may be considered guilty of a disservice both to his own budget and to the economic development of his country.

That everyone must be involved in the nation's economic upswing, if there is to be an upswing, seems to be most relevant in the area of energy conservation.

Housewives would be wise to use electrical appliances wisely. Irons and blenders and washing machines should be used only when really necessary and at nights rooms do not have to be well lit when not in use.

Offices are still guilty of having rows of fluorescent tubes on all day, even long after the last employee has left, and there are still those air-conditioned rooms which could be swept by fresh air if only windows are thrown open.

Of course there are areas in which it would be unwise to conserve on the use of electricity.

For many months there was a virtual blackout on certain city streets, and there were some who thought that this was a GEC conservation ploy.

That was not the case, as the GEC must weigh the need to conserve against the imperative of providing well-lit streets for the safety of those who use them.

The problem was replacements for faulty lights. Recently, the replacements have been put in place, and many of the lights have gone on again. And this at great expense to the GEC.

CSO: 3298/747

CONTINUATION OF CURL THOMPSON'S REBUTTAL TO BUDGET

Belize City THE BEACON in English 7 Apr 84 pp 5, 6, 7

[Speech to House of Representatives on the government's proposed budget by leader of the opposition Curl Thompson--Part II]

[Text]

The total domestic debt which stood at \$18.6 million in 1978 doubled to \$38.5 million in 1981. The \$38.5 million in 1981 doubled to \$70.8 million at the end of 1983. The only progress we are making is in our debts. There has been no thought or word about how the government proposes to repay these debts.

The government has been borrowing both from the Central Bank and the Commercial Banks, alternating at times between the two. This was when the credit ceiling to government placed on the Central Bank was reached. Section 34 of the Central Bank of Belize Act, 1982, permits temporary advances to the government not exceeding 15% of the government's estimated current revenues for the financial year. Throughout 1982/83, government's borrowing from the Central Bank was around 10% of the ceiling. In September and again in November 1982, the ratio of advances to estimated revenue was 14.9%, however hovering on the maximum permitted. This clearly shows that the government has simply been scraping the bottom of the barrel.

When borrowing by way of advances from the Central Bank had been utilised to the limits prescribed by law, the government has been resorting to increased borrowing from the commercial banks. The commercial banks have found it possible to give increased credit to the government because of the lack of private sector demand for credit. Owing to the lack of private sector demand for credit, the commercial banks have been building up excess liquidity. The Central

Bank of Belize, Quarterly Review for September 1983, states the position in these words:

"With this quarter's \$6.1 million increase in credit to the public sector, total claims on public sector amounted to \$68.7 million or 38.1 of domestic credit. Additional allotments of treasury bills accounted for \$5.6 million of this increase, pushing outstanding treasury bills up to \$30.4 million."

The Review continues further:

"With the strong growth in domestic deposits combining with weak credit demand, commercial banks liquidity strengthened ... At the end of September, the commercial banks excess liquid assets was \$26.7 million or 19.1% ... This liquidity has resulted from strong growth of deposits and weak credit demand from the private sector ...

"Experiencing excess liquidity the commercial banks continued to demand treasury bills purchasing \$11.7 million this quarter. In September the banks held \$23.2 million worth of treasury bills and loaned the public sector \$20.9 million in loans and advances. At the end of the third quarter i.e. September 1983, the commercial banks provided the public sector with over 60% of its credit needs."

This vicious circle of living on borrowings is closing on the neck of the government with the newer and larger borrowings maturing and debt servicing siphoning away 15% of recurrent revenue.

The government has been resorting to these ever-increasing heavy borrowings without any prospect of repaying them. The initial borrowings have not rolled over into never larger borrowings. The stagnant economy is not generating any increases in revenue. The recurrent revenue has been virtually static. It was \$77.7 million in 1979/80, \$77.8 million in 1980/81 and \$82.4 million in 1981/82. We have already seen the reasons for the stagnation, which have now become cumulative.

For this manner of governmental financing by borrowing, the Monetary Authority passed strictures on the government, in its 1981 Annual Report, as follows:

"During the year there has been a phenomenal increase in the public sector's borrowing from the domestic system. The increase was particularly marked in the second half of the year. The expansion in public sector borrowing was associated with Central Government's growing deficit. The estimates approved by the legislature for the 1981/82 fiscal year project a surplus of \$0.4 million on government's financial operations ... Despite this projected sur-

plus on government's fiscal operations for the year, the first six months of the fiscal year revealed a sizeable deficit of about \$8.0 million ... during the past two years Central Government has been increasingly seeking support for its budgetary deficit on the domestic market ... Public sector borrowing rose from \$29.5 million to \$38.6 million, an increase of 31.0% in 1981. The expansion in public sector borrowing this year accounted for 44% of the total increase in net domestic credit ... large-scale borrowings of this magnitude tend to blunt the efficacy of monetary policies in regulating bank credit and curbing inflationary pressures in the economy."

The Monetary Authority then proceeded to lay the blame squarely on the government in these words:

"It must be emphasized that monetary policy by itself cannot curb inflationary pressures, stabilize the exchange rate of the currency, facilitate surplus on current account of the Balance of Payments and accelerate economic growth, though it strives to achieve these objectives. To be effective, Monetary Policy has to be buttressed by a large measure of fiscal restraint and efficient economic management, the development of adequate infrastructure in the economy and the adoption of appropriate policies conducive to growth and development, all of which fall within the preview of public policy."

The Central Bank of Belize, in its 1982 Annual Report was also highly critical of government's fiscal policies and borrowings, when it stated:

"Proposals for the 1982/83 fiscal year are projected to result in a balanced budget this year with the deficit on the capital account being financed by Central Government's current account savings of \$15.1 million. Measures taken to expand government's local revenues included increases in customs duties, stamp duties on imports, and revenue replacement duties ... Central Government's operations in the first six months of the 1982/83 fiscal year produced a small deficit of \$1.7 million ... Financing for the deficit was provided primarily by the domestic banking system. There was however, a sizeable difference between the deficit and the rise in domestic credit to the public sector ... Following a 40.1% increase in 1981, net credit to the public sector rose by 44.6% in 1982 ... Direct lending to government sector rose by 53.0% as a result of increased accommodation by the commercial banks. Several large loans were made by the banks in 1982, the largest of which was a consortium loan of U.S. \$4.0 million to meet Belize Electricity Board's payments for imports of diesel from Mexico ... Towards the end of 1982,

however, the rapid growth in domestic credit was dampened following the conclusion of negotiations on a loan to the public sector under the Caribbean Basin Initiative and the receipt of funds under this scheme. A portion of these funds was used immediately to meet overdue payments on a number of public sector loans, both local and foreign."

The critical situation arising from shameless or wasteful borrowings becomes clearly evident by the use to which the Caribbean Basin Initiative funds were put. They were not utilised for any development programme to increase productivity but were "used immediately to meet overdue payments on a number of public sector loans, both local and foreign." No amount of new loans are going to suffice the operations of the government, for they become utilised to pay back the "overdue payments." This is a trap that the government has set for itself and today it has become impossible to get out of it.

The government's expansionary financing by bank borrowings combined with increase in the money supply of 18% in 1980, 7.7 in 1981, 16% in 1982, and 15% in 1983 have come to exert significant inflationary pressures. The consumer price index to which the Hon. Minister of Finance referred in the Budget Speech is no true measure of the inflationary impact in the country. The money value in the hands of the people has fallen significantly in the last few years. While the more vicious open inflation has led to substantial increases in the cost of living resulting in many sacrifices by the people in their consumption and living standards, the repressed inflation which lurks in the background and contained by unrealistic price levels is about to burst through the seams. With economic stagnation, not a downslide and with total absence of any development programme for increased production in the future, the repressed inflation is bound to turn into open inflation, as has happened in many of our neighbouring countries of Central and Latin America. There is the well known theory to most people as the Law of Diminishing Returns.

Briefly it means that more taxation does not necessarily mean more returns. There will come a time when more taxation will bring in less returns as people search for other ways to feed and clothe and shelter their families; as they look for ways to evade the law, to import less goods, or to smuggle more goods.

The inverse of this is also true. It says that excesses of spending cannot go on indefinitely. The day of reckoning is sure to come.

I do not need to paraphrase the Scriptures to inform you that this year 1984 is the P.U.P. year of reckoning ... The year of liberation. You already know this, and our Minister of Finance, who is so fond of quoting Scripture might find it enlightening by looking at St. Mark Chp. 1 Verse 5.

Looking at the budget proposals for 1984, I am confident that this government cannot last, given the urgency of its economic problems. The budget proposals, read by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister a week ago are but a facade, a sham, a stone-walling, to cover up the deep ulcer of incompetence and economic incest which has been plaguing our country for the last seven years under the PUP rule.

Focusing in on the Domestic or Recurrent Budget, the Minister of Finance was compelled to eat bitter herbs, when after many years of denying the nature and extent of the country's woes, was obliged to confess to this Hon. House that the budget for 1983/84 has fallen short by some \$11 million. The significant figure here is not the \$11 million, but the realisation that this \$11 million represents more than 14% of government revenues last fiscal year.

There was a shortfall of 14% in the revenue performance; meaning that government received only 86% of what it needed to run the country. When we look at the actual budget projection for last fiscal year, we see where the government had counted on receiving \$98 million in revenues. This means that the government only received 69% of what it expected to receive from its budget proposals.

This is a serious matter - an urgent and serious matter. Because if the country had it to give, it would have given it, as it has always done. The seriousness of the situation lies in the fact that the country no longer has it to give. Belize has given all its substance to the PUP, and now it can give no more. You cannot squeeze blood out of stone.

It is not only commerce and business that are hurting. The people of Belize, working men and women and their families have suffered a big reduction in their standard of living. The money is not enough to buy even food. But the grinding taxes are always there, and the grinding social security is ever present.

For this fiscal year government has proposed a budget of \$95 million with new taxation measures accounting from \$3 million out of this. This means that government is expecting to earn some \$92 million from the traditional sources of revenue.

This is ridiculous, and herein lies the crassness and hypocrisy of the 1984-85 budget. Government collected \$75 million from all sources last year. By what *ex machina* does it hope to collect \$92 million this year. This is \$17 million more than \$75 million. It represents an increase of more than 12%.

It would be improper of me to impute improper motives to the Minister of Finance in this Honourable House, but what else may one deduce from a sloppy piece of camouflage such as this. Our Minister of Finance has been Budget Master since 1966. Is this the best that he can do?

Mr. Speaker, as I stated last year and I repeat again today, the economy of this country is completely mismanaged and yet reflects a colonial mentality. In Colonial days the emphasis was placed on a few main industries and it was regarded as the only source of revenue to the country. The Colonial masters sought to maintain that situation for it was most suitable to them at the time.

Today we are a new nation and we are continuing the very same colonial economic plan. WE REFUSE TO DIVERSIFY ... WE REFUSE TO CREATE NEW INDUSTRIES WE REFUSE TO EXPAND ... WE CONTINUE TO IMPORT AT AN INCREASE RATE as I have said earlier so that the government can raise additional taxes on imports.

Now ironic it is Mr. Speaker for one to see on display in our supermarket: FROZEN CASSAVA ... FROZEN CRABS ... FROZEN TURKEY DINNER ... FROZEN CHICKEN DINNER AND SHRIMP ... also the market is now flowing with Mexican confectionery.

The government has failed in managing the economy.

What it is competent in doing is that instead of building and managing it is selling ...

I have learnt that the Seaview site is being sold or about to be sold.

It has sold the houses at the Barracks.

It has sold the ice factory.

It has sold the Rockville quarry.

It has sold the Rest House in Corozal.

It has sold or is contemplating selling the choice land next to the Civic Centre.

It has sold the Slaughter House land or is contemplating selling it.

I understand that the Big Falls will be sold.

As a matter of fact as I have said earlier the government has already mortgage the country and we are not able to redeem ourselves.

The government has been doing away with all the country's assets. I believe the people will be next.

Because of government's failure, Belizeans are fleeing the country by the thousands each year, and hoping not to return.

Unemployment is at its highest ... the standard of living of Belizeans has been reduced almost to nil and the people are being reduced to beggars.

Our farmers have now turned to illicit trade in order to survive.

Mr. Speaker, there is no need to examine the estimate of the various ministries for it reveals no significant increase in any particular area. What it means is that the very very poor situation and difficult times we have experienced over the last twelve months will continue for another 12 months. The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister stated in his speech that there are other projects in the Capital Budget estimated at \$49.3 million which have been included but which sources of finance have not yet been identified. And he went on to name the projects ... low cost housing

Rehabilitation Rockview Psychiatric Hospital

New Belize City Hospital

Belize International Airport Terminal Complex

New Belize City Post Office

New Belize City Fire Station

All this is only vote-getting gimmicks for we all know that this year is election year and we know that the people are crying out for better medical services, improvement in the Post Office to curb the interference of mails and we all want a house. Mr. Speaker, from all this I am saying that the only structure we will see being erected is a large blue and white sign saying ... This is the Site of the New Hospital ... or New Post Office or New Fire Station. We had this experience before in 1979 and the hospital is yet on the draft board.

CSO: 3298/733

PRICE'S PERFORMANCE DURING HONDURAS VISIT DEFENDED

Belize City DISWEEK in English 6 Apr 84 p 3

[Article by Stewart Krohn]

[Text]

Several weeks ago there appeared in this newspaper an editorial which was highly critical of certain remarks made by Prime Minister Price on an official visit to Honduras. The P.M., it seems, committed the sin of calling Honduras a democracy. This apparently bothered the editorial writer to such an extent that he not only castigated the Prime Minister but also took the occasion to run down the government of "Hondurass."

The article could be considered an attempt at humour had it been written by a student in primary school. As a lesson in foreign policy it demonstrates that after two and a half years of independence our out look is as immature as ever

It is not for me to defend the government of Honduras or George Price's abilities as a diplomat, both parties are mature enough to ignore the ravings of a sopholoric editorial writer. But for the record let it be said that there is nothing wrong (in fact there is everything right) with the Prime Minister of Belize visiting a neighbouring state---one which happens to be bigger than us, and a potentially important friend---saying nice things. This is called diplomacy.

As for whether or not Honduras qualifies as a democracy that is not really the issue. But since some people think it is let's take a closer look. The real problem, it seems, is not that Honduras is or isn't democratic, but that its rulers are tools of U.S. policy in Central America. I too dislike the role which Honduras is playing and believe that it will result in ruin for that unfortunate country, but that opinion says nothing about democracy. In fact if we are going to draw a continuum of democracy in Central America we might well find that by most criteria our good friend Panama is at least as undemocratic as Guatemala and El Salvador and much more so than Honduras.

And what about Belize? It's easy to look at our easygoing society and cast aspersions at our authoritarian neighbours. But let's not forget that even in Guatemala -- yes in the belly of the beast -- there are dozens of independent radio and television stations that can and do criticize whatever government happens to be in power.

Democracy, like beauty is often in the eye of the beholder. If it is "rass" we are looking for we need not look far.

CSO: 3298/733

EXPLOSION IN DANGRIGA WRECKS CAR BELONGING TO ARANDA

Belize City THE REPORTER in English 8 Apr 84 p 1

[Text]

DANGRIGA POLICE investigating a mysterious explosion which destroyed the Ford Bronco belonging to Dr. Theodore Aranda, leader of the Christian Democratic Party in Dangriga, have detained a Garifuna man - Norris Garcia - and are holding him incommunicado for 72 hours.

The vehicle had been parked for the night in Dr. Aranda's yard, about 150 feet from the street on Wednesday, April 4. The explosion, which occurred on Thursday morning shortly after 2,

destroyed the vehicle completely. The Ford Bronco was covered by the third party insurance only.

Contacted at his home in Dangriga Dr. Aranda told the REPORTER he is convinced that the destruction of his Bronco is an act of political sabotage directed at him. He said he had received a number of threats against his person following the recent Town Board elections.

Dangriga Police appear to be operating on the theory

that the sabotage came from disgruntled people opposed to Dr. Aranda's CD Party, but UDP leaders in Dangriga have disclaimed any knowledge or responsibility for the act.

In Belize City, a statement issued by the U.D.P. Leader, Mr. Manuel Esquivel, said the United Democratic Party was sorry to hear about the destruction of private property and deplored it.

"The UDP feels obliged to condemn this kind of violence", Mr. Esquivel said.

[Editor's Note: A report on the incident in the Belize City DISWEEK in English on 6 April, page 3, said in part:

"Police have confirmed that an explosive device may have been the cause of the explosion. Pieces of dynamite fuse were found in the area. No arrests have been made so far.

"Dr Aranda was voted from the UDP early last year when the party hierarchy charged him with 'arrogance.'

"In an unrelated incident, his home was extensively damaged in December last year by fire. Police at that time confirmed the fire was sparked off by an 'electrical short' caused by a thunderstorm."]

CSO: 3298/733

ACCESS TO ELECTION COMMISSION RECORDS FOR PUP ORGAN HIT

Belize City THE REPORTER in English 8 Apr 84 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text]

THE DISCLOSURE in the Supreme Court last week, that the Manager of the Belize Sunday Times, the official organ of the People's United Party, had access to the records of the Elections and Boundaries Commission, and that on at least one occasion he requested and obtained four photographs of registered voters believed to be dealing with illegal drugs has caused the presiding judge to comment publicly about the irregularity of the procedure.

The disclosure has also given citizens of Belize a rare glimpse of the inside workings of the PUP system, which is used to circumvent the law when it suits the party's purpose.

If the Manager of the Belize Sunday Times has access to the confidential records of the Elections and Boundaries Commission, it is fair to ask: "Who else has access to these records?" The question assumes a new dimension when one recalls that only recently the Supreme Court ruled that the United Democratic Party did not have any right under the law, to even make a copy of the records contained in the Commission's binders of registration forms.

It has been clear for sometime now that the Elections and Boundaries Commission is not the independent fair-minded authority it was intended to be. It has become a subverted surrogate organization which has wheeling and dealing for years, working feverishly and illegally through its registrations policy to keep the entrenched People's United Party in power.

Evidence of Ministerial tampering, evidence of illegal possession of voter registration cards, evidence of double registrations have all pointed to the Elections and Boundaries Commission as being a sinister Trojan Horse and a hotbed of PUP stratagems and activity.

Demand for electoral reform, rising ever since the Commission began its work in 1979, have not been able to make the slightest impression on this man-made monstrosity posing as the constitutional guarantor of free elections but which in fact has become the biggest subverter of the democratic principle of "one person - one vote".—

The duplicitous role of the Elections and Boundaries Commission was exposed quite by accident - because one of its photographs, used in the newspaper, identified the wrong person, and the aggrieved party has taken civil action to recover damages against the Belize Sunday Times. This is the action which is presently being heard in the Supreme Court.

This newspaper does not want to do or say anything which might be interpreted as any kind of comment on this case. But we would be lacking in our perceived sense of public duty if we did not point out that the unsavoury role of the Elections and Boundaries Commission in this matter falls far short of meeting the standards of acceptable conduct.

CSO: 3298/733

UDP ACTIVITIES, CANDIDATES, RESPONSIBILITIES NOTED

Village Council Successes

Belize City AMANDALA in English 6 Apr 84 pp 6-7

[From 2-page spread headed THE UDP BULLETIN, Vol 1, No 20, 8 Apr 84, and carrying caveat: "The UDP Bulletin is an official publication of the United Democratic Party, constitutional opposition of Belize. The views expressed in the UDP Bulletin are not necessarily those of the editorial board of AMANDALA."]

[Text]

As village council elections continued during March, several significant changes have occurred. The trend to ousting the old guard of the PUP continued all over the country. Even Gales Point, an area which has voted overwhelmingly for PUP over the years, saw a shake up last week when a new generation of villagers snatched the power away from the old, entrenched PUP machine.

In the northern village of Progreso, village council elections were held on Wednesday, March 21. The UDP won these elections hands down. The new Chairperson is Marina Kay, and the Deputy-Chairman is Mario Magaña.

In San Narciso, home town of Florencio Marin, elections were held on Friday, March 23. UDP Political Officer Mr. Concepcion Campos, also a son of San Narciso, rallied his people together and once again the old PUP went down. The new chairman here is Aniceto Campos, and the Deputy-chairman is Asterio Ortega.

An election was attempted at Bullet Tree Falls in Cayo North, but was stopped when Shoman saw defeat staring him in the face. From early in the week the Social Development Officer Mr. Tapia had informed UDP candidate "Dito" Juan that he did not see a need for an election because the PUP had al -

ready sent him their 7 candidates' names, so all he had to do was inform the people who the new village council -lors were. Mr. Juan soon set him straight on that, and an election was arranged for Sunday, April 1. After putting off the start of the meeting for more than two hours to await Shoman's arrival, nominations were finally called for. When non-PUPs tried to nominate, Mr. Tapia refused to call on them, calling instead on PUPs.

After much hassle and shouting, nominations had reached 10 names when the old PUP chairman moved that nominations be closed.

At this the people became outraged, and Shoman and Tapia seized the opportunity to cancel the elections. But the people stayed back to listen to Mr. "Dito" Juan, and they vowed to defeat Shoman both at the village council and later on in the general elections.

Government had better not try to pull the same trick they did in Crooked Tree two years ago and say that there can be no elections in Bullet Tree Falls because March has come and gone! The people will not stand for that, and Shoman would certainly pay for it in the general elections.

UDP Disruptions

Belize City DISWEEK in English 6 Apr 84 pp 4, 9

[Text]

Village Council election that were to be held in Bullet Tree Falls, Cayo District last Sunday, 1st April, were called off by the Social Welfare, after UDP supporters created chaos in the hall.

The UDP have felt bitter about the fact that the overwhelming majority of Bullet Tree Falls villagers support the PUP. Once considered a UDP stronghold,

the village shook the UDP in the 1979 general elections by giving a massive majority to the PUP candidate, thereby ensuring a PUP victory in the Cayo North division.

Ever since then the village has been a solid PUP stronghold, but UDP leaders have bitterly resented it. Bullet Tree Falls has been the only village in that division in

which village council elections are conducted "Succotz style", with each party putting up seven candidates and all villagers voting solidly for one slate or the other. At the last village council election two years ago the PUP slate won by about a hundred votes .

A similar result was projected for last Sunday, but UDP supporters went to the elections determined to interrupt the process. Backed up by over a dozen stalwarts from San Ignacio, the UDP supporters made a lot of noise, created mayhem, and brought the proceedings to the point of a violent explosion before the officer from the Ministry of Social Services, Mr Tapia, was forced to call off the elections, since the violent atmosphere created by the UDP made it impossible to conduct the election in a peaceful and mannerly order. The action of the PUP in stopping democratic elections by the threat of violence has not pleased the villagers, and even some of their own supporters are shocked at the blatantly anti-democratic behaviour of the UDP. One UDP villager lamented the fact that this was a new element in the history of village politics and felt ashamed that his village would get a bad name as a result of the actions of the few UDP thugs. The only reason the UDP behaved this way was that they knew they could not win the elections. This bodes ill for the likely behaviour of the UDP in the general elections.

In the circumstances, it is expected that the Minister of Social Services will set another date for the elections after an appropriate cooling-off period. In the meantime, the existing village council will continue to exercise its functions.

Thompson Nomination

Belize City THE BEACON in English 7 Apr 84 p 2

[Text] Hon. Curl Thompson, Leader of the Opposition in the House and incumbent in the Mesopotamia Division (Belize City), has been elected once again as the United Democratic Party's representative for this constituency. He will be seeking his second consecutive term of office.

The UDP convention was held at the Party Headquarters at 19 King

Street on Thursday night, and attracted a good crowd of party members and supporters.

Guest Speaker for the Mesop Convention was Party Leader Senator Manuel Esquivel, and the Vote of Thanks was moved by Party Chairman Mr Dean R. Lindo. The Convention was chaired by Director of Organization Mr. Santiago Perdomo.

Opposition Responsibilities

Belize City THE BEACON in English 7 Apr 84 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text]

WHEN the United Democratic Party holds its Fifth Biennial Conference on Sunday, May 27, certain subjects of immediate importance to Belize are bound to dominate its agenda.

These, we believe, will include questions of defence and national security for Belize; immigration and the refugee problem; unemployment and the general state of the economy; the health services; electricity and the general problem of energy; agriculture and industry and of course, trade and commerce.

There are other topics which could, and should, engage the attention of the political leaders of the country. These include education, housing, land and lots, labour, the postal services, roads, sports and the state of our cities, towns and villages. But undoubtedly, a list of priorities will have to be made for the consideration of party delegates.

Because Belize is now an independent nation, it is primarily the decisions and policies of our political parties (or the lack of these) which will determine the fate of the country. Ordinary citizens will therefore expect an increasing degree of political expertise and maturity from their leaders and the parties.

The party in Opposition is expected to demonstrate militancy, without recklessness; political leaders are expected to know their jobs and to be familiar with the system of government under which this country operates; they must be responsible spokesmen for the people in expressing grievances against the Government and in proposing redress for such grievances they must visibly demonstrate their capacity to govern if the fortunes of the polls should suddenly bring them to power.

The two main political parties of our country have different norms and traditions. In the governing People's United Party, masses of supporters are convened to rubber stamp policies and decisions taken by the leaders. Every utterance from the platform is greeted with cheers of approval. It is a formula that served the party well during the days of colonialism, when Belizeans believed that no matter what their political leaders did or neglected to do, Mother England was there to pick up the pieces, to rectify the mistakes and to keep the ship of state floating, despite whatever.

The Opposition, however, has been built on the tradition of debate, dialogue and consensus. Delegates must be persuaded that the policies and decisions proposed are in the best interest of the party and, more importantly, the country. Party leaders are constantly under the scrutiny of members and supporters.

We believe that this is the better formula for Belize as the nation plunges through the stormy seas of international affairs, where the quality of leadership determines to a great extent the fate of a people for generations to come.

CSO: 3298/734

BRIEFS

EXPULSION OF LEBANESE--By order of the Minister of Home Affairs, three citizens of Lebanon, Majdi Nakhodr, Hari Eid and Kholed Mohammed, have been issued with expulsion orders. The said persons have been known to behave as if they were living in the Wild West, threatening and shooting off firearms in a wanton and reckless manner. Recently two Belizeans, Charlie Bowman and Hilmar Rodriguez were injured as a result of a gun incident on North Front Street involving the same "militia men." [Text] [Belize City DISWEEK in English 6 Apr 84 p 3]

PAKISTANI ENVOY--Diplomatic relations have been established between Belize and Pakistan. His Excellency Mr Amir Usman on Monday presented his credentials to Governor General Dr Minita Gordon in her Belmopan office. Mr Usman is now the first Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Belize. Mr Usman is resident in Mexico and is his country's accredited representative of eight other Central and South American countries. [Text] [Belize City DISWEEK in English 6 Apr 84 p 2]

MINISTERS IN JAMAICA--Minister of Natural Resources, Mr Florencio Marin, visited Kingston last week for discussions with his Jamaican counterpart Dr Percival Brodwick. Mr Marin was accompanied by Deputy Minister of Works, Mr Samuel Waight, who represented the Belize Marketing Board and Mr Raymond Fuller, technical advisor. Mr Marin and the Jamaican Minister of Agriculture Dr Brodwick discussed matters of mutual interest, including the status and direction of the Caribbean Food Corporation, progress on the Belize/Jamaica joint regional development project. This involves Caricom Farms Ltd, an agricultural enterprise in Belize, and the newly proposed CARICOM Common Agricultural Protective Policy. The two ministers are also expected to discuss other trade possibilities in agricultural products between Belize and Jamaica. [Text] [Belize City BELIZE SUNDAY TIMES in English 8 Apr 84 p 3]

CSO: 3298/735

MILITARY OPTION SEEN AS KEY TO SOLVING CENTRAL AMERICAN CRISIS

San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 20 Mar 84 p 16A

[Commentary by Gonzalo J. Facio: "Contadora and the Military Option"]

[Text] The military option in the Central American crisis has not been ruled out by the government of the United States. That is because abandonment of military resistance to the offensive of Soviet power in Central America would be a defeat in advance for the efforts being exerted by the Reagan administration in the diplomatic and economic sectors to stop that offensive.

The National Bipartisan Commission, reflecting all the shrewdness as a diplomat displayed by its chairman, Dr Henry A. Kissinger, said in this regard:

"A country (such as the United States) can project its power without the need for using force in a real military encounter. However, it is a basic rule of the art of politics that consideration of the risks is the catalyst of diplomacy. In this instance, we can only hope that diplomacy is successful, if we make those whom we wish to persuade understand that there are circumstances under which the use of military force by the United States or others could be necessary as a last resort." (Page 142 of the "Report," Editorial Diana, Mexico, 1984).

In spite of the praise which almost ritually is voiced daily for the Contadora Group, it is true that its focus in the Central American crisis is totally wrong and that, therefore, the military option cannot be ruled out.

In Nicaragua, the Contadora Group shares the mistake of ignoring that the conflict in which Sandinism is involved is fundamentally an internal conflict and that in no way did it originate in the ill will of its Central American neighbors, much less of the United States.

The people of Nicaragua wanted freedom, economic progress and social justice. For those reasons, they rose up in arms against the dynastic regime of the Somozas. However, the Sandinist commanders, trained, armed and indoctrinated in Cuba, betrayed the revolution of liberation. Instead of political freedom, they rapidly constructed a totalitarian state similar to that of Cuba. Instead of economic development, they have deepened the poverty of the Nicaraguan people. Instead of distributive justice, they have created a new privileged class--the

Sandinist Nomenklatura--which is taking for its own use the resources of which it deprives most Nicaraguans.

Because the revolution of liberation has been betrayed, democratic Nicaraguans have resumed the armed struggle. And they have had to do so from abroad because inside their country, which is subjected to the totalitarian control of the Sandinists--as happens in any other Leninist regime--it is practically impossible to take up arms against the tyrants.

The combatants for the liberation of Nicaragua necessarily require foreign military assistance. Otherwise, how could they fight against those who control the apparatus of power in their country, which is nurtured by copious military aid provided by the Soviet Government through Cuba, Libya and East Germany?

With respect to the view that it is not possible to abandon the military option vis-a-vis the Sandinist regime, the Kissinger commission states:

"A successful counterinsurgency (military) effort is not a substitute for negotiations. However, such an effort--the quicker the better--is a necessary condition for a political solution." (Page 129 of the "Report")

On the basis of the erroneous or deliberately false conception of what is going on in Nicaragua, the countries of the Contadora Group maintain that the solution rests in negotiation of bilateral friendship rather than military treaties with countries presumed to be opposed to Nicaragua: El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica and, above all, the U.S. Such a solution would produce two negative results: (a) It would eliminate the foreign aid required by those fighting for freedom in Nicaragua and (b) it would consolidate the Sandinist totalitarian regime, permitting its apparent legitimization through the device of fraudulent elections.

What is happening in El Salvador is the opposite of what is going on in Nicaragua. In the former, a nation which is the victim of social injustice and the violence of death squads, foreign aggression is taking place, which is sponsored by the Soviet Union and directed by its Cuban and Sandinist satellites. But the countries of the Contadora Group, accepting as truth the false propaganda of the Farabundo Marti Front, are focusing on the problem as if an internal uprising is taking place. For that reason, the Contadora Group countries, just the opposite of what they are doing in Nicaragua, are not seriously proposing an end to foreign aid to the Salvadoran rebels but are instead proposing that the government, the indirect product of the first free and verified elections in El Salvador, negotiate with the Farabundo Marti rebels to install a shared government, in spite of the fact that those guerrillas have been unable to earn their right to participate in the government on the battlefields and much less in the elections.

Therefore, the solutions proposed by the Contadora Group, which takes their point of departure from an erroneous view of the Central American reality, cannot produce the desired peace in the region. There is no positive solution if diplomatic agreements allow to remain standing, with full force and political and military viability, regimes whose ideological foundation is the promotion and spread of political subversion in neighboring regions.

The Reagan administration knows this. Therefore, without openly opposing diplomatic plans, which at heart are sell-out plans, it is maintaining its troops in friendly, threatened countries such as Honduras, its military advisers in El Salvador and its support for the combatants who are fighting for freedom and independence in Nicaragua.

8143

CSO: 3248/561

BRIEFS

NO PROOF OF 'SECRET ARMY'--As of yesterday, both the Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS) and the Judicial Investigation Organization (OIJ) had no information or proof concerning the formation of a secret army by the Popular Vanguard Party, according to Dr Fernando Cruz, head of the Public Ministry. "The police organizations have nothing which would give us a concrete clue to the existence of such a group," Dr Cruz added. Action was taken by the Public Ministry after statements were made at the beginning of March by Manuel Mora, founder of the Vanguard Party, in which he said he had proof of the formation of a private military group. This caused the president of the Legislative Assembly, Jorge Luis Villanueva, and the president of the Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC), Rafael Angel Calderon, to call for official action by the judicial authorities on this matter. Up to now, according to Dr Cruz, there have been no positive results as regards the gathering of proof which could be used as the basis for a criminal indictment. "The DIS has told me unofficially that it has nothing, and the Miscellaneous Crimes Branch of the OIJ says it has no information on this subject," he emphasized. "For the moment, there is no basis for the placing of charges," the official emphasized. He said that as part of the investigation he would call in journalists Lafitte Fernandez and Victor Hugo Vargas, of LA NACION, in an effort to determine the scope of their analysis of the statements attributed to Mora Valverde. "We will take that as far as the professional confidentiality of newsmen permits," he added. Cruz said that he has not set a deadline for submission of a statement from the founder of Costa Rican communism which will give his version of this story. [Text] [San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 21 Mar 84 10A] 8143

NEW CENTRAL BANK PRESIDENT--San Jose--Marco Antonio Lopez, Costa Rican minister of economy and commerce, was appointed president of the Central Bank on 30 March. Lopez' appointment was made by Luis Alberto Monge, president of the republic, after learning of the resignation of Dr Carlos Manuel Castillo, who is a first-round presidential candidate of the National Liberation Party now in power. Lopez received his degree in economic sciences from the University of Costa Rica and has a master's degree in economic development from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. Previously, he held the posts of Minister of Planning, Costa Rican ambassador in Washington, director for Central America of the Inter-American Development Bank and vice president of the Costa Rican Development Corporation. [Text] [San Jose LA NACION INTERNACIONAL in Spanish 5-11 Apr 84 p 17] 8143

BRIEFS

LEGAL RIGHTS WARNING--Roseau, Dominica (AP)--A former senior judicial official has warned that the legal rights of Dominicans are being eroded because the legal system isn't independent. Former Chief Magistrate and Director of Public Prosecutions, Charles Williams, said in an interview published in Dominica that he felt politicians could eventually threaten the legal rights of Dominicans. "I feel we may reach a situation where the ordinary man in the street would have his legal rights threatened at some stage in our history for political reasons," he said. Williams, who resigned from his post because of administrative problems, said: "You want a director of Public Prosecutions who can stand between the politicians and people and do justice." "The dangerous thing is that the people are unaware of how their liberties are being eroded," he said. "We go about our daily tasks and we don't hear a knock at the door and we think everything is o.k., but as a matter of fact it's not in certain instances; it's worse than a dictatorial state," Williams told the newspaper, "The Drum." He said several members of the judicial system had resigned because of frustration over the inability to form an independent association. "We wanted to have an independent judiciary, and to our dismay our members are being chopped up one-by-one," Williams said. Government Press Secretary Alvin Knight indicated the government would react to Williams' statements later. [Text] [Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 21 Mar 84 p 5]

CSO: 3298/736

FRA SUPPORTERS SET FREE TO CHOOSE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

Guayaquil EL UNIVERSO in Spanish 3 Apr 84 p 5

[Text] Nine of the 12 provinces represented at the National Executive Convention of FRA [Alfarista Radical Front] supported total independence of the party during the runoff election. For this reason a document whose contents are public knowledge and in which the term "national Left" replaces "Left-Center," was accepted as a compromise in the long drawn out deliberations.

The problem lies in the fact that those nine provinces manifested, through their respective leaders, that neither Borja nor Febres Cordero represents an alternative for solving the great national problems and that they are, in addition, a denial of democratic principles.

The conflict within FRA prolonged the Convention's deliberations for more than 9 hours during which it was even stated that Abdon Calderon Munoz, FRA founder and leader, would not have allowed identification with Borja and would also have rejected the possibility of rapprochement with Febres Cordero.

The Guayas, Pichincha and Napo representatives were the only ones who advocated support of the Democratic Left candidate, taking into account the party's leanings, and without this implying any obligation toward the future government of Dr Borja, but rather reserving for FRA the right to constructive criticism and opposition to steps which would be against the interests of the majority of the Ecuadoreans.

On the other hand, Galapagos, Cotopaxi, El Oro and Rios were the first to advocate the absolute independence of FRA with the rejection of the Febres Cordero and Borja candidacies. This proposal was supported by the Imbabura, Canar, Esmeraldas, Bolivar and Loja delegations.

Meanwhile, Jaime Aspiazu supported FRA's Left-Center position but Dr Miguel Falconi and the leaders of the Quito People's Committee openly advocated support of the Democratic Left. For this reason, the declaration which was finally approved was a compromise between the irreducible stands taken during the Convention, and it was a specific resolution rejecting the national political Right.

CENTRAL BANK REPORTS LOWER INFLATION RATE

Guayaquil EL UNIVERSO in Spanish 4 Apr 84 p 3

[Text] An analysis made by the Central Bank of Ecuador reported that the inflation rate (price increases) fell for the third consecutive month, dropping to an annual rate of 48 percent between March 1983 and March 1984.

The annual inflation rate was 49.7 percent in January; in February it dropped to 48.8 percent and in March to 40 percent.

This does not mean that prices are dropping but that whereas they rose at an annual rate of 49.7 percent up to January, by March they had risen by only 48 percent per year (between March 1983 and March 1984).

On the other hand, the Quito Central University estimated that food for a 5 member worker's family required in 1980 an expenditure of 74.01 sucres while in 1984 it requires and expenditure of 197.23 sucres; that is, 166.5 percent more.

The following is the report published by the Central Bank analyzing the inflation:

Rate of Inflation

The March inflation rate was 48 percent which is lower than that of the two previous months of 1984 which were 48.8 percent in February and 49.7 percent in January.

The March results confirm again the slowing of the nation's rate of inflation which began in August 1983.

On a monthly basis, the March inflation rate was 2.5 percent which is fundamentally due to the 4 percent rise in food and beverage prices during the last 30 days. The rise in housing, clothing and miscellaneous goods continue to be substantially less than that of food and beverages. In March the inflation rate was 1.8 percent for housing; 0.9 percent for clothing and 0.4 percent for miscellaneous goods.

Annual Rates

The 48 percent annual inflation rate can be broken down as follows: 70.7 percent for food and beverages, which is below the rate for the months of January and February 1983 when the rates were 76.3 percent and 72.8 percent; that is, on a yearly basis, the inflation rate for the price of food and beverages is also dropping. As to the cost of housing, the March annual rate was 26.3; of clothing 32.3 percent; and of miscellaneous goods 31.5 percent.

Although the March inflation rate confirms the slowdown as compared to the same period last year, it is important to stimulate programs to counteract the inflationary prices.

According to the Central Bank, the encouragement given to farmers' markets where the producers come together and, in addition, the maintenance of a firm distribution policy for these products by ENPROVIT [National Enterprise for Vital Products] may contribute to a further slowing of inflation in April. The same thing might occur in the case of some products on the miscellaneous list.

A projection for the rest of the year of the inflation rate based on the first 3 months of 1984, shows that unless phenomena should occur which cause substantive changes in the behavior of the price rates, the annual inflation rate will be 30 percent, which is a drop of almost 50 percent in comparison to the 1983 rate.

9204

CSO: 3348/359

RIGAIL, PENAHERRERA ON VICE-PRESIDENTIAL ROLE, OTHER ISSUES

Guayaquil EL UNIVERSO in Spanish 6 Apr 84 p 5

[Text] Attorney Aquiles Rigail Santistevan and Dr Blasco Penaherrera Padilla, the candidates for vice president of the republic, appeared on TV Channel 2 last night to express their views.

Rigail said there would be no radical changes during the 4 years in which he would participate in the government.

He added that there will be a close relationship with the president of the republic and not as is the case with the present government in which President Dr Osvaldo Hurtado ignores the positions of Vice President Leon Roldos.

Dr Blasco Penaherrera said that the vice president of the republic should be in the style of the United States where there is no difference of economic views.

He said that he would be a political collaborator of the president of the republic and would carry out his ideas.

He said that planning should not be in the economic field alone but also in other fields such as education, national security and so forth.

Social Goals

Rigail said that the government in which he will participate will be oriented toward social goals, without impoverishing the great masses, through a participatory democracy in which the workforce and other elements of development are present, taking a centrist position.

Dr Penaherrera replied that the position of the Democratic Left is not a centrist one since it is affiliated with the Socialist International and that they, the members of the National Reconstruction Front simply plan to do things in a reasonable way.

Rigail replied that it is false to say that the Democratic Left is a transnational political organization since its roots are Ecuadorean.

He added that faith is necessary for building a new Ecuador and that it would be suicidal to harass private enterprise. What must be attained is greater investments.

Dr Penaherrera agreed that creation of wealth in the nation is indispensable.

Rigail said that a good government should foster a balance among the different levels of production by approaching the exact middle. This is what he defines as centrist, that which moves away from the extremes which are harmful to the nation's welfare.

National Integration

Dr Penaherrera announced that they will form a government of integration while Rigail suggested changes in certain state mechanisms such as fostering production, and he described economic rights as a social necessity.

He said that they will not seek to nationalize anything because this is not in the Constitution, from which they will not depart at any time.

Dr Penaherrera said that in the government of the National Reconstruction Front in which he will participate with Leon Febres Cordero, official decisions will not be motivated by political interest but by what the nation's development requires.

Rigail, the vice-presidential candidate for the Democratic Left Alliance, the People, Change and Democracy, said it does not favor the disappearance of ENAC [National Enterprise for Warehousing and Marketing] and ENPROVIT [National Enterprise for Vital Products], but that their methods of operation should be improved.

He also expressed his support for the maintenance in certain cases of political prices in order to protect the consumer, and especially in order to facilitate access to raw materials, seeds, tools and so forth.

Dr Penaherrera, the vice-presidential candidate for the National Reconstruction Front, said that there should be no more beating around the bush on the matter but technical support to increase production should simply be provided. He commented that that had been his conclusion on the subject as a result of his experience in directing the National Planning Board which was later replaced in some respects by the National Corporation for Development [CONADE] over which the vice president of the republic presides.

Concerning Electoral Fraud

Rigail said that the pet phrase of election fraud is always used by the defeated candidates and that this deceptive attitude has been eliminated from our midst.

He admitted that there were shortcomings in the election process but this was not deliberate and that machines have not yet been invented which can guess

what people think in order to insure electronically by means of computers that citizens be eliminated so that they not vote for certain candidates. His party does not oppose changes in the register of voters or a reorganization of Electoral Tribunals.

Dr Penaherrera replied that the Legislative Investigative Commission appointed by the National Chamber of Representatives found that there were irregularities in the electoral process such as inconsistencies in the registration of voters, absence of numbering of the ballots, which lends itself to the manipulation of the election returns by making use of blank ballots along with other irregularities, which he said were actual crimes.

He also said that the Supreme Electoral Tribunal should be reorganized because it has lied a great deal to the nation.

9204

CSO: 3348/359

BRIEFS

POLICE TRAINING--St George's, Grenada, Tuesday, (CANA)--Grenada will from this month be able to train its own policemen, according to a statement from the British High Commission in Barbados. Britain, which is co-financing the training, said the local courses for officers of the Royal Grenada Police Force will supplement those already taking place at the regional training centre in Barbados. As a result of "extensive alterations and repairs" carried out under the British Government's aid programme, a Royal Grenada Police Force training school has been established at the former St George's grammar school. Thirty new entrants to the Royal Grenada Police Force will begin their basic training under the instruction of assistant superintendent Joseph Robinson and Sergeant Alfred Gibbs who recently made a study visit to Barbados. The recruits will undertake a comprehensive 12-week course in police law, criminal procedure and evidence. After a period of operational duties, they will return to the training school for further training, the High Commission said. Since the beginning of this year, the British Government's technical co-operation programme has enabled 60 police officers from Grenada to receive training in Barbados and three are plans for a further 70 to enter the college there by July. [Text]
[Port-of-Spain EXPRESS in English 11 Apr 84 p 1]

CSO: 3298/737

NEW LABOR AMENDMENT BILL PASSED OVER STORM OF OPPOSITION

WPA Objections

Georgetown DAYCLEAN in English 17 Mar 84 pp 1, 2

[Excerpts] The August 1977 Minimum Wage Agreement, the Act of Faith between the Guyana Government of the then Prime Minister Burnham and the TUC, is now to be part of an Act of Parliament--four years and two months after it came to an end. And four years and two months after the end of the Agreement, the Horseman is ordering the unlawful National Assembly to say that it is still in force.

In the LABOUR AMENDMENT BILL, No 5 of 1984, dated March 8, 1984, Burnham and his new plantation managers have declared contracts made between Guysuco and Mr S. Teemal, for NAACIE group employees, for labour in the year 1979 to be unlawful.

The Labour Amendment Bill, No 5 of 1984, tramples and tears up the rights of all workers.

It is more proof that we are living under a dictatorship and not a semi-dictatorship as the PPP thinks. But the Bill also takes away paper rights granted in the Burnham-PNC Constitution of 1980. In Clause 8(2) of the draft law (the Bill) Burnham declares that no corporation or manager or court can consider any employee entitled to any money for 1979, more than the 1978 wages, "UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE PRESIDENT."

The 1980 Constitution made Burnham the Supreme Executive Authority. The 1984 Labour Amendment Bill will make him the Supreme Trade Union.

The Bill Will Turn Lawlessness Into Law

Against the interests of public sector wage and salary earners, the Bill declares that the TUC has power to bargain and make Collective Labour Agreements for them, over the heads of their unions, and without any consultation or notice or advice or any veto in the hands of the individual unions. Thus the law withdraws recognition from the unions as bargaining agents and gives this recognition to the TUC. From now on, all Collective Labour Agreements, that is, all Agreements between the government and the TUC in the public sector are binding.

Here is a list of some of the things which will be made law by the Labour Amendment Bill.

1. The TUC will now bargain for all public sector employees and such agreements will be binding on all unions and all employees, whether or not they belong to any union.

2. No management nor court can grant employees any money for the year 1979 which is above the 1978 wages. Any court order granting any such benefit, even under the Master and Servant Act, is null and void and of no effect.

3. In case any union is now thinking about going to the High Court for a declaration under Article 142 of the 1980 Constitution that the workers' property in wages has been seized without compensation, Burnham has put a stop to that. The Bill says that wages can be seized without compensation. You can go to court for your Mercedes or Datsun, but not for your \$14-a-day due since January 1, 1979. Let us recall Article 19 of Burnham's 1980 Constitution: "Every citizen has the right to own personal property which includes such assets as dwelling houses and the land on which they stand, farmsteads, tools and equipment, motor vehicles and bank accounts."

There is nothing now to stop Burnham from bringing a law to say that your other assets, if you have any, like bank accounts, can be lawfully seized. This is the meaning of this new law. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear.

Alcan, Bookers and the foreign big boys are still getting compensation for their property, but workers' wages can be seized without compensation.

4. The Bill goes further. It allows any public sector employer who paid increments between January and May 1979 to workers, in place of the unpaid \$14-a-day, now, four years after, to call back for that money. We know who will give the instructions.

This is the same spiteful Burnham of "Beware My Brother Forbes" written by his sister, Jessie Burnham.

5. The 1977 Minimum Wage Agreement stated that it would end on December 31, 1979. Burnham's bill now says that it is still in force. Seven years after the signing of the MWA, the Bill is saying that the Agreement is binding, except for the 1979 \$14-a-day wage.

6. The draft Labour Code defined a Collective Agreement as an agreement between an employer and a recognised union. The Labour Amendment Bill alters this definition. A Collective Labour Agreement is now one between the government and the TUC in the public sector.

7. The foolish arguments of the paramountcy of the government over the law put forward by Mr Lloyd Luckhoo to the Court of Appeal on behalf of Guysuco are now made into law. The Bill overthrows the October 1983 judgement of the Court of Appeal.

The Bill Threatens the Future of the Entire Guyanese Working People

The higher authority then produced the Labour Amendment Bill, No 5 of 1984, dated March 8, 1984, International Women's Day.

As a result of this bill, all unions, starting with the public sector unions, now face derecognition. The unions are to be replaced by the TUC. And the TUC is to be replaced by LFSB, the Supreme Trade Union.

Clause 8(2) of the Bill states: "Unless otherwise directed by the President, no public sector employee shall, on and from 1st January 1979 and as long as article 1 of the aforesaid agreement continues to be in force, be entitled or be deemed ever to have been entitled, to claim, receive or recover as wages in relation to any period any amount in excess of the amount he would be entitled to receive as wages for that period if the rate of wages payable to him continued to be the same as the rate at which wages were last paid to him in 1978." In other words, the Dictator is saying, not a cent more than you got in 1978. And if you did receive more, as some public sector employees did, the Dictator has decreed that "the whole or part of such amount" may be deducted from your wages.

DAYCLEAN welcomes the GAWU strike ultimatum to Guysuco in solidarity with NAACIE, the smaller sugar union. But this fight is not a NAACIE fight. It is an attack against all unions. It is an attack against wages. Attorney-at-law and long-time trade unionist Ashton Chase has said that the Bill in effect will tend to ban strikes. The WPA release to the press and public on March 13 said that the Labour Amendment Bill threatens the future of the Guyanese working people.

WPA supports those trade unions fighting against the present bill and repeats that it is ready to join with all patriotic forces and all who stand for democracy and multiracial power, regardless of ideology, to work for an end of the rule of these desperadoes.

Provisions, Implications of Bill

Georgetown CATHOLIC STANDARD in English 18 Mar 84 pp 1, 4

[Text] The Labour (Amendment) Bill 1984 which was introduced in Parliament by the Government last Mon was due to be debated on Fr Mar 16.

The trade unions, the lawyers and the opposition political parties are all urgently considering the implications of the Bill, which are serious indeed.

The Bill does the following:-

- 1) It amends the Constitution, which presently states that no man may be deprived of his property (which includes a right under a contract to be paid for his work) without compensation.

The Bill removes from this protection any law which regulates wages, whether it is retrospective or not, and whether it is backdated even to a day before the enactment of the present Constitution in 1980.

This now permits wages to be reduced unilaterally and retroactively by the procedures set out in the Bill and described below, or by any other law which the Government may see fit to enact.

2) The procedure mentioned above would also be contrary to the provisions of the Labour Act which prohibit employers from deducting anything they wish from an employee's wages.

The Bill therefore amends these provisions as well, by providing that they shall not apply to "any wages paid to the employee in excess of the wage he is entitled to receive."

The Bill limits such deductions to instalments of not more than 25% of the weekly or monthly pay.

So deductions can now be backdated and the employees have to repay money that they thought they had earned lawfully.

3) The Bill makes any "Collective Agreement between any employers or their organisation of unions (such as the TUC) binding in law, not only on the parties to the agreement, but "in the case of an organisation of which any other organisation is a member" also binding on "every member of that organisation."

Thus an agreement between (say) officials of the TUC and (say) Lysons Knitwear, Kissoons or Toolsie Persaud, Ltd--to take a private employer--which agrees to reduce the earnings of their employees or diminish their conditions of work, would be legally binding on those employees, whether or not their unions signed the agreement or were consulted by it or even know of it, because, if the TUC signs the agreement, it binds every member of every union that is a member of the TUC insofar as the employees affected by the agreement are concerned.

Binding Agreements

4) The Bill makes any "Collective agreement" between the TUC (expressly mentioned in this section) and the Government or any public corporation legally binding on the employees affected by it.

It is interesting to note that this section, which deals with public employees does not contain any reference to the agreement being binding on them, if they belong to a union which is a member of the TUC, (as does the section mentioned above in relation to private employers).

If the TUC signs an agreement with the Government concerning all public sector employees, the employees are bound by it under this Bill, whether or not they belong to a union and whether or not their union is a member of the TUC.

The TUC officials can thus agree to reduce or freeze or limit wages of public sector employees who have no direct or indirect connection with the TUC whatever.

5) The Bill also makes the 1977 agreement between the TUC and the Government binding in law until it is altered or replaced by any other agreement (this is to reverse the decision of the Court of Appeal mentioned above).

This effectively freezes the wages of public sector employees at their 1978 pay, unless the President otherwise directs.

The Bill places any post-1978 increases exclusively at the mercy of the President.

6) Lastly, the Bill stipulates that an injunction should not be granted against the functioning of arbitration tribunals.

Such tribunals are usually in labour matters appointed by the Government.

The implications of the Bill are clearly immense. As usual, the time given by the Government for considering them is too short to permit a mature evaluation.

However, among the questions which arise are:

1. Is it any use belonging to a trade union when its power to negotiate conditions of work is overridden by the powers of TUC officials to negotiate such conditions without reference to the unions or its members?

2. At least in respect of unions representing employees in the private sector, the Bill seems to make it more in their interest not to be a member of the TUC in order to avoid being bound by agreements between the TUC and private employers.

Any Use Belonging?

In relation to public sector employees, there may be no use in belonging to a union any more, as the TUC may negotiate for them, whether or not they so belong, or whether or not their union is a member of the TUC.

3. "Wages" are defined in such a manner as to include salaries.

"Public sector employees" are defined by the Bill to include Government employees and employees of the public corporations.

Does the Bill therefore extend to all Government employees, high and low?

Fundamental Effect

4. In order to deprive Mr Seeram Teemal of his small judgement, the Government has passed a general Act which may have a more fundamental effect on the trade union movement, as we know it, than any other measure enacted in the last 50 years.

CATHOLIC STANDARD Comment

Georgetown CATHOLIC STANDARD in English 18 Mar 84 p 2

[Editorial]

[Text] The Labour (Amendment) Bill on which we carry an article in this issue has been introduced by the Government in a manner to which Guyanese have become far too accustomed.

Born on a Monday, married on a Friday, to be buried only by militant action on the part of the people.

This is so because no one counts but the elite that rules us, nothing is sacred to the elite that rules us, and no institution or voice can influence the elite that rules us.

The cynicism and contempt for ordinary people and their organisations shown by the Bill exceeds even the previous performance on the Referendum Bill.

The centralisation of power is now complete--only the officials of the TUC now matter in the trade union movement, because only on them can the Government now depend.

So they are given power by statute to agree to alter wages and other conditions of employment of workers, whether or not those workers have their own union.

Some may see the Bill in yet another light. Negotiations with the IMF are supposed to be resumed later this year.

This Bill will give the Government power not only to freeze, but to 'roll back' public sector wages prior to such negotiations, and to go to the IMF and say "no need to discuss reducing public sector expenses--we have done that already--by Law!"

The Christian who is not a lawyer or economist may note instead how unfair it is to take even the mite given to the small man, (Mr Teemal's increase that the Court of Appeal upheld in Oct last year was a mere \$6.50 a month!) whilst the big boys get the perks, including cars imported with the bauxite produced by those same ordinary workers.

"Give us this day our daily bread" has now become, "give back half of yesterday's loaf": "produce or perish" has become "pay back or punish."

Perhaps the spirit of Mr Justice Luckhoo's words in the Court of Appeal best describe what the Bill wants to do to our poor long-suffering people:

"It would, indeed, be an alarming situation for an employee to be told by his employers that no matter what they have set out as the terms of employment, they would reduce his salary at any time they thought fit, and that, if he did not like what was done, he could seek employment elsewhere.

"This would be contrary to all ethical, moral and legal concepts.

"It is not done in civilised communities."

Workers' Resistance

Georgetown OPEN WORD in English 19 Mar 84 pp 1, 2

[Text] There must be a determined fight for a parliament in Guyana. That fight must begin now, or better, yesterday, and at all levels of the people.

The government long ago made the national assembly their tool. It is so controlled that it takes no note of public opinion.

The two members of the United Force were not even there to vote on the Labour (Amendment) Bill. Those members of the opposition who were there, the PPP, have explanations to offer the Guyanese people.

Saturday's CHRONICLE reports that the PPP abstained on four sections of the Bill and voted no on two sections. If the PPP did not abstain, it should say so early and demand space in the CHRONICLE and to give the facts. If it did abstain, it must say why.

The PPP had written to Minister Denny to ask for time to study the Bill and to ask that the TUC be consulted. Denny denied both requests.

So what was the PPP abstaining on? Did it find some clauses of the Bill harmful and some not harmful? Was the Bill only 25% objectionable? The opposition in Parliament, if it did abstain, showed a regrettable lack of firmness.

If a regime acts in an unprincipled and thuggish way in rushing legislation through Parliament, the least we can expect of those who chose to go into Parliament, the opposition, will be present and will vote against it.

On the trade union front, GAWU did not abstain. Its solidarity has been reported on all estates and NAACIE has thanked the bigger union. CCWU, GMWU and BGSU have filed a writ in the High Court seeking an interim injunction to restrain the TUC from bargaining on their behalf. Members of other public sector unions should call on their leaders not to abstain in this struggle.

In any proper country, there would be branch and/or general meetings to discuss the new Act with members and get a workers' position on the new laws.

What will be the TUC's position?

The application presently before the Court asks the TUC to act in accordance with the decision of the delegates' conference that bargaining should be resumed by the unions in each industry. A TUC Executive Minister, Denny, in the face of that vote, got parliament to decide against the workers' wishes that the TUC should bargain for the public sector unions.

For years the Labour Code Commission Report has been lying around. It is true that that Report called for legally binding collective agreements. Nothing was done until the regime was in trouble with Guysuco payments to NAACIE for 1979. To lay down that the 1978 wage was legal for 1979 and to cancel the increment granted Teemal by the Court, the regime had first to make the 1977 Agreement binding. By making the 1977 Agreement legally binding, they could then make the 1979 part of it not legally binding. This is what the whole Labour (Amendment) Bill was designed for.

Any future amendment to the Labour Act should make it law that the opinion and attitude of the TUC shall not be the position of its supreme organ, the annual delegates' conference, but the attitude of the government. For the TUC has no opinion of its own.

PPP Appeal for Delay

Georgetown MIRROR in English 18 Mar 84 p 1

[Text] The PPP wrote to Labour Minister Kenneth Denny urging him to defer the controversial Bill now before Parliament so as to enable the perturbed labour movement to discuss it first. In the letter the PPP noted that the Trades Union Congress had not even been consulted about it, though the Bill refers to the TUC in many areas of the proposed legislation.

In a press release the Party said:

The PPP has written Minister of Manpower and Co-operatives, Kenneth Denny, asking that the Labour (Amendment) Bill, No 5 of 1984, (due to be taken in the National Assembly on Friday) be deferred to permit of a longer period for study and consultation.

The Bill has aroused great concern because examination so far has revealed that it could be the most anti-working-class piece of legislation since the Referendum. The Minister was told that it was understood that the TUC had not been consulted about it, and that up to mid-afternoon on Tuesday 13th the General Secretary, Mr Joseph Pollydore had not even seen it.

Guyanese will recall that one of the principles of the settlement in the 1963/64 upheavals was that the TUC would be consulted by the government whenever legislation affecting the working class was being prepared.

Bar Association Criticism

Georgetown MIRROR in English 18 Mar 84 p 1

[Text] A press release from the Guyana Bar Association says:-

The Guyana Bar Association condemns most vehemently the Labour (Amendment) Bill 1984. The Bill in its present form is destined for passage through the House of Assembly with the accustomed speed, haste and indifference to reasoned opinion. It is more than a Labour Bill, it amends the Constitution. The Government's plan to pass the Bill within five days of its being made public is untenable.

This protest is aimed at exposing the more atrocious features of this proposed piece of legislation.

--The Bill seeks to amend with retroactive effect to 1977, the workers right to own property as is guaranteed by the constitution. (Wages are seen as workers' property).

--This fundamental right of any worker over his property is now being attacked and if not resisted, may be extinguished altogether.

--The right of unions to bargain for workers and to enter into collective agreements is being abrogated, and the TUC is to be entrenched as the bargaining agent. This offends the common law rule of privity of contract and effectively denies the worker the right of choice of his own union. It offends I.L.O. conventions to which all Caribbean governments subscribe.

--The bill alters completely the accepted role of trade union vis-a-vis their membership.

--It is a bold shameless and barefaced act to reverse the decision of the Court of Appeal of Guyana whose fair and unbiased ruling reiterated the fundamental right of the worker to be paid wages as due.

--It is giving to the president the sole exclusive and absolute right to decide when, if at all, any employee in the public sector can be paid wages in excess of what he was receiving in 1978. Rule by presidential decree is being ushered in.

--Finally, no court in Guyana will in future be able to grant any injunction against any Arbitration Tribunal in the performance of its duties as a tribunal.

We concede that the Parliament is the Supreme Law making body, but it is not the Supreme Court of the Land, and was never intended to function as such. It is the function of the Court to interpret the law. The present piece of legislation introduced with such hubris is aimed at the subversion of these established rules.

The legislature is now placing a heavy shoe in the face of democracy and the rule of law, and we join with every organisation, body or group in resisting this intrusion. It is our sacred duty to expose this spectre, and give support to all those who could join with us in seeking discontinuation or modification into a more palatable piece of legislation reflecting our traditions and established rules of law and justice.

"Law is the safest helmet; under its shield none are deceived," and as the representatives of those traditions we remind ourselves and others of the maxim LEX NON FAVET DELICATORIO VOTIS. "The law favours not the wishes of the dainty."

Passage by National Assembly

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 17 Mar 84 pp 1, 4

[Text] Manpower and Co-operatives Minister Kenneth Denny yesterday assured members of the National Assembly that the Labour Amendment Bill is a progressive measure and does not seek to take away the rights of workers.

The Minister, who was piloting the Bill through the National Assembly noted that some of the proposals in the Bill resulted from recommendations from the Labour Code Commission in which members of the minority People's Progressive Party (PPP) and GAWU took an active part.

The Bill was later passed in the Assembly by majority votes with the PPP abstaining in the case of four clauses and voting "No" in the case of two other clauses. The United Force was not represented at yesterday's sitting of the Assembly.

Clause Four of the original Bill was deleted so that workers who were paid increased wages in 1979 by Guysuco would not have to make any refunds to that corporation.

Deleted

And, in his contribution to the debate, Vice-President and Attorney-General Dr Mohamed Shahabuddeen explained that the Guyana Government was not too big to have second thoughts about the particular clause which it had decided should be deleted.

Dr Shahabuddeen rejected contentions that the Bill sought to overturn an order of the Guyana Court of Appeal to pay increments to a sugar worker.

The Attorney-General told the Assembly that although Parliament has the power to change the law, it cannot say that a court's decision is wrong since the Courts are there to interpret the law.

He cited several cases in the United Kingdom and India to illustrate his point that quite often the weakness of existing legislation can only be seen in retrospect, when a test case takes place.

He pointed out that the sugar worker succeeded in his case against the Sugar Corporation simply because the 1977 agreement between the Government and Guysuco was not legally binding.

Earlier, Minority Leader Dr Cheddi Jagan had made an unsuccessful attempt to have the debate postponed. He contended that his party and the Guyana Trades Union Congress needed more time to study all the implications of the Bill.

In presenting the Bill for its second reading, Cde Denny explained that the Bill was intended to correct a number of irregularities existing in the country's labour laws.

Binding

He stressed that practitioners in Industrial relations have long recognised that the country's labour laws did not serve the interests of workers and the nation. The Bill reflects a radical departure from the colonialist system, he said.

The Minister pointed out that the Labour Code Commission had recommended that collective agreements be made legally binding as was, indeed, what the Bill was seeking to do.

"In Guyana, collective agreements are mere gentlemen's agreements," Cde Denny told the House, noting that this feature lends itself to abuse.

The Minister was critical of what he called the "immoral" action of the National Association of Agricultural Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE) for issuing a strike ultimatum to Guysuco before seeking dialogue.

He noted that the corporation has no dispute with the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) and pointed out that the agreement which exists between the two organisations did not make provisions for sympathy strikes.

He also wondered what GAWU hoped to gain by starting its strike yesterday instead of Thursday when the strike ultimatum deadline had ended.

Allegations

In response to the Minority Party's allegations that the Bill was intended to ban strikes, he said these allegations were "wicked, malicious and insipid."

For his party, Minority Chief Whip, Reepu Daman Persaud accused the Manpower Minister of not properly stating the government's position on the legislation.

According to Persaud, the Bill "dismantles trade union conventions and laws." It was, he argued, an "objectionable piece of legislation."

He also alleged that the PNC Government was using Parliamentary procedures to subvert the law and was attempting to take away workers rights--an allegation strongly denied by both Cdes Denny and Shahabuddeen.

PPP backbencher Cyril Belgrave also contended that the Bill seeks to take away workers' rights.

In winding up the debate for his party, Dr Jagan alleged that the Government wants to be the employer and also bargaining agent for workers.

But in response to the opposition criticisms Minister Denny assured the House that the Bill is not intended to dismantle trade union law since nothing in the law seeks to nullify such laws. (GNA)

TUC Silence

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 17 Mar 84 p 1

[Text] General Secretary of the Guyana Trades Union Congress, Cde Joseph Pollydore said yesterday that it was "regrettable" that the TUC was unable to offer any comment or recommendations on the Labour (Amendment) Bill.

Cde Pollydore, in a letter to Cde Kenneth Denny, Minister of Manpower and Co-operatives, said that three copies of the Bill, No 5, of 1984, Labour (Amendment) Bill 1984, as published in the Official Gazette of March 8, 1984 have been received by the TUC.

One copy was received late on Tuesday afternoon and two other copies on Wednesday morning, Cde Pollydore explained.

"I am writing to inform you that because of the insufficient time between the receipt of copies of the Bill and the debate (on the Bill), the TUC is not now in a position to offer any comment or recommendations on the proposed legislation," Cde Pollydore said in the letter to the Minister released yesterday.

CSO: 3298/739

PPP CALLS ON TUC TO FIGHT FOR JUST WAGE INCREASE

Georgetown MIRROR in English 18 Mar 84 p 1

[Text] The PPP, joining the clamour for decent wages, issued the following press release:-

An IMF-dictated wage-freeze policy in 1978 pegged wages at the preposterously low level at \$11 per day as the minimum, and caused the non-payment of the \$14 per day minimum for 1979. The government said recently that it would discuss with the TUC the important question of wage increases for the country's hard-pressed producers.

The PPP reiterates its support for the adamant demands of the nation's work force for a just reward for their selfless contribution to production. For the past 5 years they have undergone tremendous pains, and despite the PNC's squandermania, corruption, extravagance and bankrupt policies, have kept production going against great odds.

In its usual callous way, the regime gave hefty increases to high-salaried bureaucrats while showing contempt for the ordinary producers. These, too, must be given wage increases to help them cope with the strangling cost of living and devaluation.

The Technical Committee of the TUC has made several recommendations for wage increases, none of which found favour with the regime. The most recent calculations of the Committee suggest a minimum wage of \$38.10 daily or \$988.30 per month for a family of 6 for 1983. Current prices after steep increases due to the 25% devaluation this year make even that figure outdated.

The TUC must not be disarmed by discussions. At a time when the government seems bent on heaving more burdens onto the backs of the working people and transgressing their hard-won rights, the TUC must stand up and fight back. How long would this body confirm to the diktat of PNC officialdom?

The PPP calls on the TUC and individual affiliates to fight the issue of wage increases until it is won. Workers, however, must be on guard, for it is not unlikely with the present set-up in the TUC that that body would not once again sell out. The fight for food, wages and justice must be taken to the streets to bring a halt to the big-stick anti-worker policies of the regime.

POLLYDORE STRESSES TUC ROLE IN PROTECTING WORKERS

Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 21 Mar 84 p 4

[Text] Trades Union Congress General Secretary Joseph Pollydore yesterday stressed the need for finance and training of trade union leaders if they are to perform effectively.

He declared that the trade union was asking for money to build a strong, militant trade union movement and not to overthrow the Government.

"Our objective is to protect and promote workers interests," he told his audience at the Guyana Teachers' Association New Amsterdam auditorium.

Addressing participants at a teachers' seminar on the theme "The role of trade unions in Guyana today--the rights and responsibilities of workers," Cde Pollydore said that with trained personnel in the movement, there could be fruitful communication between the Government and the workers for national economic recovery.

Earlier, he urged trade unionists to speak with conviction and strength when negotiating workers' cases and not be submissive to ideas without properly analysing the situation.

According to the veteran trade unionist, there was no need to quarrel if those who were advocating the workers' case could be honest in their presentation. The seminar, being sponsored by the GTA, in collaboration with the World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession and the Canadian Teachers' Association, was declared open by Acting Regional Executive Officer Cde Joseph Macintosh.

Cde Macintosh called on the teachers to be committed to their profession and to examine the exodus of their numbers.

He said under the new structure, the Regional Administration depends heavily on teachers to effect changes in society and for materials to execute national goals.

"You have a pivotal role to play in moulding the nation and in bringing about desirable standards, ethics and discipline among our youths," he stressed.
(GNA)

CSO: 3298/739

JAGAN REVIEWS MULTIPLE SHORTCOMINGS OF ECONOMY

Georgetown MIRROR in English 18 Mar 84 p 3

[Cheddi Jagan column "Straight Talk": "Guyana: A Bed of Thorns"]

[Text] "There is no doubt," President L.F.S. Burnham told the Supreme Congress of the People, "that 1983 has been a bed of thorns." A month-and-a-half later on 30th January 1984, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Carl B. Greenidge, in his budget speech said: "I can offer no comforting solution which will allow us to survive and prosper."

This gloomy position is rooted in the fact that since 1976 Guyana's economy has been in a tailspin, with ever-increasing budget and balance of payments deficits.

The dismal, bankrupt situation was frankly admitted ("tell it as it is") in the 1980 budget speech of the Vice-President for Economic Planning and Finance. He pointed out: "At the end of 1977, we had fallen into arrears of payments due on external transactions in the amount of \$102 million. We were not paying our debts and we were becoming uncreditworthy as a nation." Two years later, referring to the worsening situation despite lavish outside financial assistance, he said: "In consequence, many suppliers have stopped exporting goods to us other than on a cash basis; and in some countries their export insurance agencies have withdrawn cover from us. We are not deemed to be credit-worthy at this time."

By the end of 1983, the position further deteriorated; commercial arrears relating to the payment of goods and services reached US \$250 million. (G\$937.5m).

Year after year, production targets set by the Burnham regime are not met. In 1981, the Vice-President with responsibility for the economy had told the Congress of the ruling PNC: "Over the years production in the major sectors of the economy has been indifferent. It has shown neither stability nor sustained growth. Within recent years, it can only be described as dismal."

The GDP real growth rate has shown a rapid decline as follows: 1978--minus 1%; 1979--minus 2%; 1977-81--minus 9%; 1982--minus 8%; 1983--minus 10.6%.

For the disastrous performance of the economy, the government has been constantly trying to put the blame elsewhere. In the past the "oil crisis," the "world crisis," the "weather" and "saboteurs" were the principal scapegoats. Now it's the "parallel market."

The "parallel market" is accused of diverting away from the coffers of the government valuable foreign exchange, and utilising it for consumption goods. The argument is put forward that without such diversion, the foreign exchange could be directed to the essentials for production--raw materials, spare parts, equipment and machinery.

There is some leakage of foreign exchange through the "parallel market." But even if it was completely stopped (and this is impossible), it will not solve the problem. The foreign exchange position has become acute because of mismanagement and acts of commission and omission.

In casting the blame on the "parallel market," the Burnham regime is dealing with effect rather than cause. Had it satisfied the basic needs of the people, there would have been no "parallel market."

A chronic foreign exchange shortage is being emphasised as the basis of our production problems. But this was not always a problem.

In the 1974-76 period, as a result of the fantastic leap in the world price of sugar, Guyana greatly increased its foreign reserves and with a sugar levy, the government secured over \$300 million in revenue. In the 1978-80 period, foreign exchange flowed in through IMF credits, World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank loans, and US aid assistance (37% of all US aid for 25 years).

In this 1974-80 period, the decisive factors inhibiting production were internal-minority government, lack of democracy and military/police and bureaucratic/administrative methods of rule and management, political and racial discrimination, corruption and extravagance.

IMF "medicine," aimed at a solution of the crisis at the expense of the people--wage freeze, cuts in subsidies and social services, dismissal of workers, increased taxation, devaluation--also led to lowering living standards, alienation, discontent and low morale.

Cumulatively, all these factors acted as fetters on the productive forces and caused a vicious circle of poverty.

Shortfalls in production caused declining government revenues on the one hand and declining exports and foreign exchange earnings on the other. This led to extensive borrowing: Firstly, from the local banking system to bridge the chronic, growing and huge current budget deficits (realised at 48%, 51% and 75% of current revenue in 1981, 1982 and 1983 respectively); secondly, from overseas for the capital (development) budget.

The large public debt, which increased from \$127 million in 1964 to some \$4,000 million in 1983, has become a fantastic burden. Debt payments (\$520.9 million in 1983) were 92% of current revenue (\$565.9 million), and contribute principally to the huge budget deficit of \$424.6 million. They also take an increasing amount of foreign exchange earnings--from 10% in 1977 to 42% in 1983. When to this is added the 41% of foreign earnings for mineral oil, the foreign exchange crisis, in addition to the internal factors, looms large and becomes for the PNC regime insoluble.

Clearly, Guyana needs a revolutionary-democratic approach. This can come about only with a political solution and a new government--a National Patriotic Front Government of all democratic, progressive and revolutionary forces, serving the broad interests of the workers, farmers, intelligentsia, small businessmen and patriotic capitalists.

CSO: 3298/739

BRIEFS

FRAUD AT TREASURY--Seven persons were detained yesterday and money and bank books seized as the anti-corruption drive moved to the Ministry of Finance where Police uncovered a fraud on the State Treasury. Crime Chief Cecil "Skip" Roberts said some of those detained were employees of the Ministry and others were "outsiders" to the Ministry although some worked in the public sector. The extent of the fraud could be in excess of \$250,000, he said. Foreign currency formed a small part of about \$40,000 in cash seized since the investigations started earlier this week, the Deputy Commissioner of Police added. The Chronicle learnt that the fraud is the result of a racket begun over a year ago. Cde Roberts said he should be able to announce a series of charges in connection with the current anti-corruption drive early in the new week. He indicated that charges will be brought against some corporation officials, including a General Manager, who were sent on leave about a week ago pending investigations. Also likely to be charged, are at least two members of the top brass of the Regional Administration in East Berbice who were also sent on leave while State auditors comb through books and other relevant documents related to the Region's affairs. A reliable source said the Chambers of the Director of Public Prosecutions is working very closely with the Police in studying the statements collected so far and advising on the appropriate charges. [Text] [Georgetown GUYANA CHRONICLE in English 17 Mar 84 p 1]

MINISTERS IN PARLIAMENT--Minister of Information and Public Service Yvonne Harewood-Benn and Energy and Mines Minister Harun Rashid were Friday sworn in as Elected Members of the National Assembly. The newly sworn-in members replace former Vice-President for Social Infrastructure, Steve Naraine, who is now High Commissioner to India and Sidney Sukhu who has resigned from the National Assembly. Formerly, the two Ministers served as technocrats (non-elected members) in the Assembly. Also at Friday's sitting at which the Labour Amendment Bill 1984 was approved by a 46-5 majority, Manpower and Co-operatives Minister Kenneth Denny explained that his ministry did not have figures on the number of women employed in the country. He was responding to a question in the name of Ram Karran about the number of women engaged in agriculture, industry and commerce, domestic work and office type and field jobs in the sugar industry. The Minister explained that his ministry has no records of women failing to qualify for National Insurance benefits through early retirement and other reasons. He told the House the Government's objective is to create employment for all Guyanese and it has done a lot to assist persons to become self-employed in various activities. He called on the PPP to encourage Guyanese to take up whatever employment opportunities were available. (GNA) [Text] [Georgetown SUNDAY CHRONICLE in English 18 Mar 84 p 16]

METROPOLITAN AREA COST OF LIVING RAW DATA

Tomatoes, Chiles, Onions

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 1 Feb 84 'Metropoli Supplement' p 9

[Text] To the dismay of housewives from the NZT Zone, the price of native tomatoes "shot up" to 100 pesos for second grade, and 120 for first.

Increases ranging from 30 to 50 percent have been occurring in the prices of fruit, garden produce and legumes in the public markets and collection facilities in Naucalpan, Tlanepantla and Atizapan.

Merchants and tenants at the Loma Linda market in Naucalpan agreed in stating that prices of fruit and legumes have risen "because of the strong rainy season." However, they said that the prices of some other items have "dropped" as much as 30 percent, because "there is no outlet."

The dealer Martin Fuentes said that, as a rule, during this season (a difficult financial period), "there are always high prices." For example, the price of corn field tomatoes which was previously 120 pesos increased to 150 pesos per kilogram.

The price of native tomatoes, which was formerly 80 pesos, rose to 100, and common tomatoes, which had cost about 60 pesos, were priced at 90.

Mountain chiles cost 80 pesos per quart, in other words, 320 per kilogram; large onions cost 70 pesos; and scallions cost 90.

As for fruit, Martin Fuentes said that there is a great demand for oranges; yet he has stopped buying them, because they sell for 5 pesos apiece.

Apples are selling for 300 pesos per kilogram, and mameys cost from 159 to 300 pesos (apiece).

The merchants complained that the high prices arrive that way from La Merced and La Viga, in Mexico City, because of the unscrupulous middlemen and distributors.

Several housewives, interviewed at random, claimed that, owing to the dealers' impositions, "even greens are out of reach of one's wages."

Eggs, Beans

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 2 Feb 84 'Metropoli' Supplement p 9

[Excerpt] There is complete disruption in the prices of staple products, both in self-service stores and in the miscellaneous shops, state-run stores, vendor's stalls and other business establishments around the Federal District.

"Metropoli" took a sampling in the public markets of the NZT Zone, and discovered the complete disorder that exists in the pricing of items for essential consumption.

For example, eggs are sold for up to 130 pesos per kilogram in the suburbs of the municipal capitals, despite the fact that their official price is 96 pesos.

Beans are priced at 150 pesos per kilogram for the type known as "preferred variety" and at between 30 and 50 pesos for the common, or "popular variety."

Milk, Bottled Gas

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 5 Feb 84 'Metropoli' Supplement p 9

[Text] Once again, milk is in short supply, and in many establishments, particularly bakeries, its cost has risen by as much as 10 or 15 pesos, thus evading the official price, in addition to causing further deterioration in the economy of hundreds of thousands of households.

It was only about 10 days ago that the authorities in the Secretariat of Commerce approved an increase in the price of milk (56 pesos), and unscrupulous dealers are selling it for as much as 70 pesos per liter.

In the municipalities of Valle de Mexico, milk, if it can be found, sells for 70 pesos per liter in disposable four-pack containers.

Hikes in Gas

Furthermore, the gas concession holders have raised the price of a 20-liter tank to 200 pesos, whereas its official price is only 94 pesos.

This increase, deviating from the legal regulations issued by SECOFIN [Secretariat of Commerce and Industrial Development], has occurred in the low income developments.

Because of the inadequacy of supplies for housewives' needs, they are now undergoing the problem of having gas sold to them "at the end of the truck." In other words, the gas suppliers do not put the tanks in the residences; something that has prompted a veritable exodus of housewives, who have bought themselves wheelbarrows to carry the fuel.

Short-Weight Kilograms

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 17 Feb 84 'Metropoli' Supplement p 9

[Text] Naucalpan, Mexico, 16 February--The dealers affiliated with the Naucalpan Marketers Union who operate in low income sections and developments in this town, including the Atizapan area, through which that organization, headed by Enrique Gasca Miranda, also extends, are selling 800-gram kilograms, and when housewives complain of their procedure to them, they are insulted rudely.

The foregoing was reported by a group of women led by Matilde Mena de Aranda, Maria de Jesus Luna, Marta Gonzalez, Carmen Mendoza, Marta Gomez, Felicitas Gonzalez, Maria de la Luz de Monroy, Esther Galvez and Esperanza Cantero.

The women making the statement noted that the impositions committed by the merchants are due to the lack of vigilance on the part of the commerce authorities.

They declared that the impositions are committed by the marketers to the detriment of housewives on a daily basis, without anyone's putting a stop to the excesses.

They claimed that Gasca Miranda has instructed the dealers to sell 800-gram "kilos" making the products 50 percent more expensive than at any supply center; because he is seeking to accrue funds for his campaign as a council man, either representing Naucalpan or Atizpan, and those funds have to come out of the pockets of housewives and consumers as a whole.

Meat Cuts

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 20 Feb 84 'Metropoli Supplement' p 9

[Text] After the "general strike" held since Monday of last week, it was not until the day before yesterday that butchers resumed the sale of meat; only now they are selling the product for 600 pesos per kilogram, while scraps with bone (the food with the most popular consumption) are priced at 300 pesos now.

Miguel Zepeda Martinez, leader of the Valle de Mexico Butchers Union, cited as one of the solutions for ending the problem of meat (quality, cost and distribution) the elimination of middlemen, with a greater participation by the Supply Industrial entity in bringing in cattle, as well as by the municipal slaughterhouses of Valle de Mexico.

He claimed that, in talks with the SECOFIN authorities, following his meeting with DDF [Federal District Department] officials, he had submitted for consideration the proposal to form a trust that would purchase meat directly from the cattle raisers.

Last Saturday, meat sales were resumed in the authorized butcher's shops and stores around the Federal District; however, housewives and consumers encountered the new situation, whereby a kilogram of solid meat and steak now sells for 600 pesos, and scraps with bone for 300, to the dismay and general annoyance of both.

Shirts, Pants

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 21 Feb 84 'Metropoli' Supplement p 9

[Text] The price of ready-made clothing is increasing twofold, as it goes from the manufacturer to the dealer. A shirt, the manufacturing cost of which was 600 pesos, sells for 1,200 pesos or more.

This disclosure was made by the CTM [Confederation of Mexican Workers] leader Eduardo Roman Robles, who added that clothing prices could decline if the dealers were forced not to impose their views in marking the product.

For example, he noted that there have been instances wherein a dealer has even tripled the price.

The labor representative said that ready-made polyester clothing is far more expensive than that manufactured from cotton. Nevertheless, advantage is not being taken of the fiber's low price.

He explained that, because middlemen are raising clothing prices over 100 percent, it is a disgrace that many Mexicans do not have an outfit in good condition to wear.

He remarked that, with more jobs, there will be more purchasing power; which means that then Mexicans will be able to purchase clothing and food.

In the surrounding area, men's or women's pants cost 2,200 pesos, as a minimum; a shirt costs 1,200 pesos; and a woman's blouse costs 2,500.

Undersize Bread Products

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 22 Feb 84 'Metropoli' Supplement p 9

[Text] While the authorities have delayed the granting of the minimum wage of 680 pesos for Mexico City and the metropolitan area, the bakers are causing an opposite reaction: Sweet bread has been reduced to its minimal size and, thus far, no authority has opposed the preparation and sale of such miniatures.

For the past month and a half, housewives from various parts of Valle de Mexico have been amazed at the small size of the shells, trifles, croissants, madeleines, eclairs, biscuits, fruit pies, crullers, candied fruit rools, doughnuts, etc.

All these varieties of pastries have shown up in almost uniform size in the Tlalnepantla, Naucalpan, Ecatepec, Nezahualcoyotl, Atizapan and other bakeries. The same thing holds true of the proletarian developments, as well as the bakery shops in the Aurrera, Comercial Mexicana, Gigante, Blanco and other self-service stores, including the El Molino, Lena and Elizondo bakeries.

These new pastries measure barely 6 centimeters in diameter, weighing approximately 15 grams. The cheapest is priced at 10 pesos, and the most expensive as much as 25, all depending on the type of bakery in which it is purchased.

On a tour made of several city bakeries, it was obvious that the bakers were charging too much; hence, they should be required to make white bread, rolls and biscuits for 2 pesos, in exchange for which the price of sweet bread would have no official control.

Mrs Hortensia Davila de Sotomayor, like other housewives, claimed that it has become necessary for the authorities in the Secretariat of Commerce and Industrial Development, or others, to prevent this imposition on the family economy.

"Every day, my customers buy 500 pesos worth of sweet bread and, until a month ago, it would all fit into a tray; now, they are still buying the same amount, but the bread fits into half the tray." This statement was made by the domestic, Josefina Garcia Ramirez.

Other women remarked that they have been astonished by this display of miniatuism among the bakers, when making pastries to scale.

"The cleverness that they are showing is amazing," commented Alberta Estrada de Rodriguez, "in distributing 25 grains of sugar over such a small area of a trifle."

There have been many joking, angry, shocked, and perplexed remarks, but everyone agrees that it is an imposition to allow the sale of such small-sized bread, and that it is time for the authorities to put a stop to what might well be called robbery.

"Now, 'hungry eyes' have become 'gorging eyes,'" commented a woman, referring to the small size of sweet bread in the bakeries and authorized shops in residential developments and sections of Naucalpan, Tlalnepantla, Atizapan, Ecatepec, Tultitlan, Cuautitlan-Izcalli, Villa Nicolas Romero, Los Reyes la Paz, Chalco, Nezahualcoyotl, etc.

Meat at 640 Pesos

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 25 Feb 84 'Metropoli' Supplement p 3

[Text] Despite the fact that the authorities promised to make a study in order to set the official price of meat, the problem is continuing; while sales have dropped nearly 100 percent during the past few weeks.

The foregoing was disclosed by several butchers, who agreed on the statement that food prices are still fluctuating; something that has caused profits to decline.

The butcher at the Medellin Paulino Flores Market told "Metropoli" that, despite the fact that the various authorities have been approached, they have not paid any attention to those appealing, much less informing them of the results of the study.

At present, he reported, meat is being sold for 640 pesos per kilogram, but its price fluctuates depending on the area in which it is sold. In this respect, he explained that in Ciudad Nezahualcoyotl, the product costs 560 per kilogram, but this meat is sold without having been trimmed, in other words, with fat, and hence it yields more.

In Lomas de Chapultepec, meat is selling for 750 pesos, but this meat is of better quality, and is being offered to the public trimmed. Nevertheless, many consumers are visiting other markets, where it may be procured more cheaply.

Finally, the butchers expressed concern, because "the situation has become very difficult," and the business is no longer bringing profits. They added that the least they could do would be to close down, because they are selling an average of 20 kilograms per day; but then many employees working in the butcher shops would be left without a source of work.

Beans Reach 200 Pesos

Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 29 Feb 84 'Metropoli' Supplement p 9

[Excerpt] Housewives in the surrounding area are making "panic purchases" of beans, because they are afraid that the price will continue to rise.

"Metropoli" observed that there is disorder in sales of the legume. Whereas, in the NZT Zone capitals, the official price for second grade beans (29.60 pesos) applies only to self-service stores, in the suburbs the price is 80 pesos.

And, insofar as first grade is concerned, according to complaints from CTM leaders Juan Alonso Bernal and Eduardo Roman Robles, its price ranges from 150 to 200 pesos per kilogram.

Our informants said that the Labor Congress is protecting the working class in the situation of the escalation of prices that has occurred in the case of countless items which are unrestricted and some which are controlled.

2909

CSO: 3248/550

NAYARIT PSUM LEADER GASCON MERCADO DISCUSSES COMING ELECTION

Mexico City ASI ES in Spanish No 95, 5 Mar 84 p 20

[Interview with Alejandro Gascon Mercado, the secretary general of the Nayarit State Committee of the Unified Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM), by Hector Delgado; date and place not specified]

[Text] Shortly before the election campaign kicked off in Nayarit, ASI ES interviewed the secretary general of the PSUM's State Committee there. The following excerpts contain the essential points covered in our exhaustive conversation on a wide range of domestic and international issues...

[Question] Given your political experience, what role do you see for your party in its first local elections as the PSUM?

[Answer] Well, I think that the PSUM is the only real choice for thousands of Mexicans who are interested in socialism and in enhancing the nation's democracy, because there is no other party in Mexico like the PSUM. All of the other parties are sectarian or opportunistic, to put it simply.

I feel that the most aware Mexicans belong to the PSUM, the ones who have switched from other parties, although the PSUM is not yet a completely cohesive party.

[Question] To what do you attribute that?

[Answer] To the fact that we have not yet had a chance to discuss the party's strategy and tactics in depth.

[Question] And why haven't you had the chance yet?

[Answer] I think that we have not yet gotten over our initial encounters. The leftwing tradition, its longstanding penchant for rifts is a major factor. We have not spoken up clearly because we are afraid of not furthering unity, but I think that we have to begin discussing this.

[Question] This interview could be a vehicle to that end...

[Answer] Yes, I would ask the party to discuss openly and tastefully the obstacles to unity and to refrain from bringing up such matters as the virtues and shortcomings of leaders at every level. We should be looking into the factors that are hampering our efforts towards true unity, because at times ideas are mistaken for petty ambitions. When someone says, for example: some things have to be changed in this party, others think: what does this fellow stand to gain from this personally?

[Question] What specific factors are you referring to?

[Answer] For example: Is this party Marxist? Is this party Leninist? It isn't? Why not? We are going to make our views clear. Some think that Eurocommunist ideas are valid, but they are ashamed to defend them...

I think that the people who embrace Eurocommunist ideas ought to defend them openly in front of all of us, just as some of us Marxist-Leninists defend our ideas and put them openly before the PSUM. Some people say they are revolutionary nationalists, or if they do not say so, they hold many of those ideas. Fine, we would like to know what their revolutionary nationalism consists of. What can we achieve with all this? Can we all be Marxist-Leninists? Can we all be Eurocommunists? Can we be revolutionary nationalists? If we agree on theory, can we agree on political action? Let's say so clearly.

[Question] Isn't the declaration of principles clear in this regard?

[Answer] I don't think so. Our declaration of principles should be studied in an organized way before it is amended. The whole party has to study it, because the best way to really unite ourselves is by studying and discussing our views, our ideology together.

[Question] Does this mean that if the PSUM is not running smoothly, it is because of disagreements on theory?

[Answer] I think that the common ground that we worked out for the merger was sufficient to keep us together to this point. This is one stage. The Second Congress marked a stage. We now have to lay the groundwork for unity on another level, a level that means that we all have to discuss theory.

[Question] Does this include changes in basic documents?

[Answer] We can of course hone and change them, because our documents are not the sacred tablets of Moses. In other words, we are going to discuss them with the consensus of the entire party. The discussion has to be organized and cannot take place in small, locked rooms.

[Question] Is the newspaper a step towards opening the discussion up further?

[Answer] Of course, we're gradually opening it up. The newspaper should be a forum, because one edition will treat 10 issues, and the next one will repeat 7 of them. If you've noticed, a paper takes up 30 or 40 issues involving the unions in the Federal District or the movement that is taking shape around the trade union to which some of the leaders belong. But many of the Mexican people's problems do not appear in its pages, and these are very important problems that affect millions of Mexicans.

[Question] You're talking nationwide, but...

[Answer] I think that some changes have to be made. Our policy so far has been one of small groups. If our ambition is to govern this country, we need to think about the entire country, about all the Mexicans living in our country and about how the nation vibrates as a whole, not about small cliques.

I wish it were the entire Federal District, not small cliques living there. I would like to tell my comrades in the Federal District through ASI ES that I am fond of all of them, that I have nothing against Mexico City, that I have no dislike for any resident of the Federal District, much less my PSUM comrades. I have no dislike even for the people with whom I have nothing in common politically; I want to make that clear. But the problem is that they have to stop thinking about a few Federal District neighborhoods and institutions so that we can start building a nationwide party and come to power.

[Question] What sort of people will be representing the PSUM in the Nayarit elections?

[Answer] Our party does not select candidates by faction; our procedure is as democratic as possible: secret ballot. We choose all our candidates by secret ballot. We regularly choose teachers and professionals. Only outstanding blue-collar personnel are at times nominated for public office.

[Question] By the way, how many members do you have in Nayarit?

[Answer] The PSUM has 15,000.

[Question] Do they all belong to rank-and-file organizations?

[Answer] There are 12,500 in the rank-and-file organization.

[Question] And they select the candidates?

[Answer] The mayoral candidates are selected in the public squares. The party members choose their candidates in a plebiscite there.

[Question] Even if the candidate doesn't belong to the PSUM?

[Answer] He might not. Any citizen can seek the PSUM nomination. Providing services is the issue, and you don't necessarily have to be a communist to be a good city administrator. There are many honest, fair-minded men who neither share nor are enemies of our ideology; they are people whom the populace trusts with administrative positions. That's why we feel that this is the proper way to select candidates... That's why we can mobilize a lot of people, but we are not sure that they are all going to vote.

[Question] Does this mean that the party, the newspaper and other bodies have not done enough to educate people?

[Answer] Yes, of course. We need to promote wideranging discussion here of what the elections represented. I personally know that they were fraudulent. That is a known fact, but ideas are strong, and in spite of their shortcomings elections attract everyone's attention.

[Question] But one of the things under discussion today, and the people know it, is the attitude of deputies towards per diem allowances. What's happening? What is your view?

[Answer] Look, this is a complex issue. I have been a federal deputy twice and I always handed back my per diem allowance, because I had other comrades to help me out. I gave back my entire salary. I never made use of my salary as a deputy. That is my view. Now then, the whole story in the PSUM is not that a few comrades have refused to turn back their per diems. I think that some leadership bodies have not communicated adequately or treated each other properly... I behave like a communist in whatever organization I find myself, but like a communist from the socialist countries, a serious communist, not like the communists in some Central American parties.

I think that a person should give his life, not just his money, to the party, like the old Bolsheviks did. That's what I think, but a leader has to know the party he is in charge of and possess the necessary background information to guide the development of its cadres. When a leader resorts to enforcing the bylaws, he is lost, because in a way he is revealing his lack of leadership. In other words, I could say: hand over the money. I'm the one who decides how and for what the money is going to be used because, after all, I'm the national leader, and what so-and-so thinks doesn't matter to me. According to the bylaws that's fine. But at times it doesn't work out in real life.

[Question] But the per diem allowance belongs to the party, doesn't it?

[Answer] Naturally. But a specific study should be done on each candidate, not to mention each deputy. There aren't that many that the party couldn't do it. There are 20 or 30 of them. But at times people don't want to look into things as they stand. This is what sectarianism is all about.

[Question] Will this matter perhaps finally show that some deputies have no political credentials?

[Answer] Absolutely no political sense! They are just part of political groups. Having contact with the masses is much different than not paying attention to them. Some deputies have no expenses because they remain far removed from the life of the masses; they do no work. If you don't leave your home, you don't even need bus money. But if you're a leader of the masses, you need a lot of funding.

I don't care for many leaders because of their political methods, but I get along with them because we're in the struggle for socialism. Some comrades want to make use of the political patrimony that we built up over 30 years, unilaterally; they want to hand down bureaucratic rulings. This could be done temporarily but not permanently. We have to work together.

For example, I have told Arnoldo Martinez Verdugo that we have to put our heads together in order for this party to expand. For example, there was no factionalism at the recent UGOCM [General Union of Workers and Peasants of Mexico-Red] congress. What has been happening is that because we have not had any political responsibilities in the PSUM recently, we have been devoting all of our efforts to organizing the UGOCM.

[Question] Are you optimistic as the election campaign gets under way in Nayarit?

[Answer] We have sought victory in every election that we have entered. We have never been resigned to defeat. We don't want to wage an isolated campaign. We would appreciate it greatly if large numbers of comrades came in to help us out, because the fraud technicians are also arriving from the capital of the republic. We have a history here and we are in the right. Moreover, we have a valid argument: PRI and PAN are like twins. The PSUM is the answer for the people of Nayarit. PAN is like a caged lion. If it gets out, it will be worse than a plunderer like PRI.

8743

CSO: 3248/568

PSUM'S GOMEZ CALLS STUNAM LEADER PEREZ ARREOLA 'LIAR'

Mexico City PROCESO in Spanish No 383, 5 Mar 84 pp 28-30

[Article by Gerardo Galarza]

[Text] Evaristo Perez Arreola, leader of the Trade Union of Workers of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (STUNAM), "is a liar," says Pablo Gomez, general secretary of the Unified Socialist Party of Mexico [PSUM]. "In his interview with PROCESO he doesn't say anything that's true."

In the interview published last week Perez Arreola accused PSUM of trying to subvert the union and of having adopted an "irresponsible, risky and divisive" policy; he specifically accused Gomez Alvarez of having proposed that "we divide up STUNAM" and of pressing the university staff members of PSUM to contest his third reelection.

Gomez, founder of STUNAM and, before that, of SPAUNAM [Trade Union of Academic Personnel of the National Autonomous University of Mexico], now estranged from union affairs because he discontinued giving classes at UNAM [National Autonomous University of Mexico] due to lack of time, rejects the accusations made against him by Perez Arreola, whom he characterizes as "a liar," although he acknowledges he was "a very important union leader who was an able fighter." He asserts that STUNAM is not divided and has no reason to become divided because of the upcoming internal elections in which Perez Arreola's main rival is Rito Teran of PSUM.

He says: "STUNAM is not splitting up. That is an absolutely false impression that twists things completely. I believe that the union is exercising its internal democracy: its Executive Committee is elected by general vote and the election results are respected. Many people fought for a long time to turn STUNAM into a democratic union and we founders and the current members should be proud because, in that regard, it is an example to Mexican unionism.

"What happens," he goes on to say, "is that in our environment, in our country, union democracy is very rare and when we see it in practice, as in STUNAM's case, then there is talk of division and catastrophe. There is no catastrophe. This is a proudly democratic union." He therefore denies that the confrontation between the PSUM university staff members' movement "Democratic Renovation") and that of Perez Arreola (Flores Magon Bloc) will provoke any division.

As for the charge that the PSUM is attempting to subvert STUNAM and that it has manipulated the university strikes, the PSUM leader says that his party "has absolute respect for social organizations and we have never instructed Perez Arreola to act one way or another." What's more, he says, the PSUM bylaws regulate its members' activities within other social organizations and, "above all," require them to respect agreements adopted democratically by the membership of those organizations.

"This is a standard we have set in order to avoid party antagonism with unions or other organizations, and to avoid breaking with them or affecting their internal operations. We are trying to develop internal democracy in organizations of the masses and to comply with their resolutions."

He points out that there are doubtless many PSUM mebers active in STUNAM and, "they have generated a very strong movement that has emerged institutionally as the majority, protesting the reelection of Perez Arreola, whom they believe jeopardizes the union's democracy and affects its internal operations because, if the union is to develop as a democratic organization, the main leadership will require renewal. This has not been understood by Perez Arreola, who continues to act like a caudillo. But not just that: We saw during the most recent conflicts that the STUNAM method was to negotiate with university authorities behind the union's back and then try to get the membership to support that negotiation. It is not the best method and it's what Evaristo Perez Arreola usually does."

Gomez Alvarez asserts that before the last UNAM strike (May-June 1983), "Evaristo had already reached some agreement in principle with university authorities. The workers had to decide whether to strike or not. The majority voted to strike and it is not true that PSUM tried to compel STUNAM to strike, as suggested by that gentleman, who is a liar, besides; rather, it was the workers who decided through an absolutely democratic vote, because the rector had not presented them with any proposal. What he had done was make a proposal to Perez Arreola personally during a conversation between the two of them, but not through any negotiation with the union, and the workers cannot trust these things."

In response to Perez Arreola's statement that he had consulted "the party" about everything, Pablo Gomez says: "Who knows what party he's referring to, because he has never consulted PSUM on anything, because he's never been a member of PSUM. I can vouch for PSUM."

Perez Arreola says that his consultations were evaluative and not subordinating, as PSUM now contends...

"PSUM does not have an organizational relationship with him. He is not, and never was, a member of this party," responds PSUM's national leader.

In the same note published by PROCESO, PSUM candidate Rito Teran says the party is consulted. Pablo Gomez explains:

"We have a branch of the party in the university. It has its own committee elected democratically by an assembly. Of course, that's where PSUM members

discuss the political activity problems they have in the organization they belong to. In other words, they consult among themselves. There exists in our bylaws relative autonomy for our intermediate and general membership organizations to make their own decisions, within the general bounds of PSUM's political line."

He recounts how the university staff PSUM members reached their decision to join with other forces to create the opposition ticket that will confront that of Perez Arreola: "There was a meeting with a very rich, very democratic, very respectful debate and the decision was made at the end. I attended in order to learn what the points of view were but I did not participate. I did not speak until the end, when the decision was made, and only to ask that the majority decision be implemented but by no means to influence it.

"I have never urged the university staff members of PSUM to work against Evaristo's reelection. It was their decision," Gomez disclaims categorically. He also denies having proposed to STUNAM's current leader that union posts be divided up: "I never proposed that to him. I have not spoken to Perez Arreola for many months. I had nothing to do with the problem that arose in STUNAM's current Executive Committee which resulted in three tickets. In other words, Evaristo is lying completely when he says that I proposed to him that we divide up STUNAM."

About PSUM intervention in STUNAM, Pablo Gomez says: "Perez Arreola uses an old argument that's already been used in Mexico by the reaction, by former rector Soberon, in that political parties have no reason to interfere in institutional or union affairs. He's completely mistaken because party members who are active in a union have as many rights as those who are not active in parties. The main union leaders in this country are members and leaders of PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]. Unfortunately, they combine their unions with the PRI which distorts the character of the unions. STUNAM has never been combined with the PSUM or any other party. And we fight for the separation of social organizations from the parties."

And he adds: "He's a member of a party, the 'Democratic Unity' party, which is being formed in Coahuila and aspires to be a national party having the same name. He is a prominent member, I would say the most prominent leader of that party; how can he say that parties' or party members' participation in national affairs is improper."

He mentions that affiliation with PSUM, just like with the old PCM [Mexican Communist Party], is individual and voluntary because, as he also adds, Perez Arreola's statement that "nobody in the old PC [Communist Party] or in PSUM can be unaware of the recruiting work I did at the UNAM" is untrue.

As far as PSUM opposition to Perez Arreola's reelection and its support of Leonardo Olivos Cuellar's candidacy in 1981, Pablo Gomez points out that those elections were in March and April of that year and that the PSUM was not formed until November; he denies that in STUNAM there is "a divided leftist cadre" and he says that Perez Arreola should be the one to talk about his estrangement.

PERSISTENT DOMINATION BY TAMAULIPAS FOUNDING FAMILIES SEEN

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 20 Mar 84 pp 5-A, 31-A

[Article by Edith Jimenez]

[Text] Reynosa, Tamaulipas, 19 Mar--The descendants of the 100 families that founded this city 235 years ago constitute economic and political power groups of varying strength today, from urban bosses and estate owners to PRI candidates vying for power, to the detriment of the region's sound development.

It was between 1920 and 1950 that the Gonzalez, Villareal, Palafox, Zamora, Velazco, Cantu, Sepulveda, Garza, Tijerina, Herrerias and other families strengthened their hand; particularly prominent were the political factions comprising the Garza Zamoras and Francisco Villanueva's group, which included the Herreras and the Gonzalezes.

Political power during this period was shared by the customs collector and the local ranchers. Then there was the military, while economic power came from alcohol sales, mainly by the Garcia Zamora family. The municipal elections were popularity contests and fit in well with the Ortiz Rubio and Portes Gil administrations.

Jose Cruz Contreras's power group emerged in this city in 1952 when he married Ernestina Icaza, the owner of the local urban transit system. Cruz Contreras thus combined political and strategic power, becoming the first man with real economic and strategic clout. His holdings later expanded, and he became a large urban landowner, holding the title to tracts that used to belong to the federal, state and municipal governments.

Cruz Contreras is an everpresent factor in public life, but he has not been allowed to hold office again, in spite of his association with Salvador Garcia, Barragan and some partners with large holdings in Las Vegas.

Cruz Contreras, who owns around 20 oil tankers as well as businesses in Argentina and Venezuela, is currently the head of the tax office in Reynosa, the second most important job in this Tamaulipas city.

Cruz Contreras still controls the urban bus system and has decided to cause trouble for the minibus transport system by waging a head-on battle against the Garza Cantu family, which owns the newspaper LA PRENSA DE REYNOSA, the current manager of which is the leader of the CTM [Confederation of Mexican Workers], Reynaldo Garza Cantu.

Medallions

Garza Cantu has total control over all the minibus drivers and charges 5,000 pesos a week for the medallions (he himself holds 400 of them).

Another local paper, EL MANANA, supports Cruz Contreras and his wife.

Thirty minibuses have already been burned, and 12 persons from both sides have been wounded. In fact, the recent municipal elections were almost ruined.

Heriberto de Andar, sponsored by Mrs Contreras, got together 100 independent minibus drivers to compete with the Garza Cantu monopoly, leaving his bus monopoly untouched.

Each year, Mrs Contreras, who is a magnificent administrator, and her husband stage a gathering for 3,000 guests, including senators, former governors, industrialists, current officials and their partner Newton from Las Vegas.

In order to understand the current political situation in Reynosa, which no young men and women there seem interested in, we need to take a look at the moves that were made in the past.

The Contreras family did not take the precaution of grooming people politically, but it did support certain groups. For example, last September feminist groups put forth Mrs Ernestina Icaza as a candidate for mayor of Reynosa, but the Government Secretariat rejected her because of her husband's record as an official during the Trevino Zapata administration.

The Oil Group Emerges

The oil group began developing in the 1950's, parallel to the above one. It showed its strength through the Section 36 Union, which gave it a key local position position, with Antonio Garcia Rojas in command. He was backed by the current local leader, Ernesto Cerda, who turned his back on Garcia Rojas and joined with Hernandez Galicia, La Quina, when Garcia Rojas decided to strike out beyond Reynosa, won a Senate seat and ran for governor of Tamaulipas.

During this decade the division of local workers kept state political activity at an apparently harmonious pitch, because certain public offices and strategically powerful posts were assigned by sectors.

They paid no attention to the economic growth of the Taxi Drivers Union, which was run by Reynaldo Cantu. It was thus able to rapidly amass a fortune, with which it bought the newspaper LA PRENSA last year.

Rodolfo Garza Cantu became mayor in 1965, when Carlos Alberto Madrazo was president of PRI. This is how it happened.

Raul Villarreal de Leon, a native of Reynosa and a member of the founding families, registered as a candidate in response to grassroots support. He was backed by the CTM and other grassroots organizations.

Villarreal de Leon did not, however, suit the interests of the strongest political faction at that time, which was headed by Emilio Martinez Manautou, who was then secretary of the presidency.

Where Is the Old Bandstand?

Villarreal was asked to resign, and in stepped Garza Cantu, who became the only candidate. A new political group was thus born.

The old bandstand disappeared, of course, from the main square and is still to be found at the El Puerto Ranch, which belongs to Garza Cantu, just 20 kilometers from Reynosa.

The new political group included Ramiro Garza Cantu, a contrator who has a great deal of influence in Pemex, and Manuel Garza Gonzalez, who after serving as mayor and local deputy, left to form his own group, which is currently trying to replace Governor Emilio Martinez Manautou.

The factions that wielded influence in Reynosa were those of Portes Gil, Trevino Zapata and Manuel Ravize, who was governor from 1968 to 1974. Enrique Cardenas set up short-lived groups from 1974 to 1980.

From Martinez Manautou's first selection of mayoral candidates we could see that he was supporting Efrain Martinez Rendon, a first cousin of Heriberto de Andar, thus giving this group a chance to retake power.

Miguel Valdes Revilla, from the faction led by Bruno del Rio, the secretary general of the state government, became mayor of Reynosa.

Thus, 235 years after it was founded, Reynosa has a mayor who is not politically committed to any of the traditional groups. The power groups are squabbling, and he fits in nicely as a moderator.

His city, however, lacks services, must make do with a puny budget, needs to install public utilities in low-income districts, where land tenure is also an issue, and faces major cleanup problems. Still,

he has an opportunity to muster community involvement and uproot the political power of the traditional groups that have so impaired the city's sound growth.

What Reynosa is hoping for is the return of hundreds and perhaps thousands of young people who have emigrated to the nation's capital in search of opportunities in politics, culture and the sciences because of how power has been monopolized in Reynosa over the past 50 years.

8743

CSO: 3248/574

VELAZQUEZ PROPOSES ALLIANCE OF WORKERS, INTELLECTUALS IN PRI

Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish 5 Apr 84 pp 1, 5

[Text] Before some 30 subsecretaries of state, ex-governors, senators, representatives and other politicians, Fidel Velazquez asked yesterday for "the progressivist intellect" to join with the CTM [Confederation of Mexican Workers] action in an effort to "continue to shape a free, independent and prosperous country where the people will not have to suffer the injustices and inequalities which they suffer today." For that purpose he asked professionals to unify in the interest of the country.

On the same topic, the ex-governor of Sonora, Alejandro Carrillo Marcor, proposed the creation of an organization to carry out that "transcendental purpose of unifying action with intellectualism."

Several of those attending supported this proposal, despite the fact that Senator and CTM director Arturo Romo Gutierrez, who served as moderator during the meeting, pointed out that it should be "carefully studied."

In his turn, representative and former secretary of the Federal Electoral Commission, Luis Danton Rodriguez, emphasized that, despite the loss of exchange stability, the rise in prices and the low buying power of salaries, political stability is still preserved. As a part of it, he added, it is now necessary to establish what defines a party and a movement as majoritarian. Thus, for example, he pointed out that in 1982 the PRI ratified its electoral majority as opposed to other parties and, nevertheless, the total of votes cast against the PRI and those that were cast with no indication of party, amounted to 54 percent; that is to say, the PRI majority drew only 45.5 percent of the votes.

Before the meeting, during a press conference, Velazquez had said that the CTM will organize the association with the intellectuals within the PRI to respond to the purpose of the declaration of principles and programs of action of that party. He also said that at the PRI national assembly its officers will make a 7-point presentation which will demand improving the democratization of the party in order to avoid anti-democratic decisions and to achieve the existence of a fit PRI executive committee, integrated with effective representatives of the sectors that form it, which should come out of the national assembly.

On the other hand, he said that the PRI needs "a tune-up, a valve adjustment; not a complete overhaul, but the repair of some parts that aren't working."

Velazquez explained that the CTM is seeking to reorganize politically within the PRI so that its party will be stronger. In the CTM assembly on politics, which will take place on 15 and 16 April, a statement will be drawn up of the party successes and of the part that the CTM has played in them. From there will come some suggestions to be proposed to the party.

During the meeting with PRI politicians, called by Fidel Velazquez himself, in a hotel in the capital, Luis Danton Rodriguez mentioned that while symptoms of deterioration resulting from the crisis had already shown up in 1982, an even deeper economic deterioration can be shown for 1985. In the face of this situation, he continued, we should analyze what the workers', farmers' and people's movements can offer, as part of a revolutionary progressive party which is fighting for social democracy, and what will be the Mexican electorate's answer, in this crisis, in terms of following or rejecting the program of economic retrenchment and other plans.

12472

CSO: 3248/548

PRI ATTENTION TO FEDERAL DISTRICT POOR, MIDDLE CLASS STRESSED

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 8 Apr 84 pp 4-A, 6-A

[Article by Nidia Marin]

[Excerpt] The head of the Federal District Department (DDF), Ramon Aguirre, called on Federal District PRI members to promote the party more strongly in low-income urban areas, to act more broadly on behalf of these areas and to redouble their efforts to get through to the middle class. These strategies are to be pursued in conjunction with the overhaul of PRI structures, the updating of its platform and the reorganization of its basic cells.

As chairman of the 112th Sectional Committee of the PRI Electoral District in this capital, Aguirre Velazquez said with regard to the 1985 elections that the party's reorganization boils down to the intensification of revolutionary theory and practice, a comprehensive reorganization starting with the basic political action cells (the sectional committees), strengthening the alliance with the masses and maintaining a revolutionary government that serves them unconditionally, the updating of the party's ideological platform in keeping with true grassroots demands, and the intensification of party activity on an increasingly democratic basis.

During the meeting at which the 112th National Committee began working on the planned overhaul of PRI, pursuant to the 12th National Assembly, Aguirre pointed out that democratic procedures in PRI activities are particularly important in the Federal District.

"Mexico City society demands a political middleman that bears in mind the viewpoint of the average citizen living in a huge metropolis like ours," he said.

He mentioned how important it was for PRI in the Federal District to regain the confidence and solidarity of its legitimate constituency: the lower classes, "by promoting the party more strongly in low-income urban areas, by acting more broadly on behalf of these areas and by redoubling its ability to get through ideologically to the urban middle class."

Mobilizing the Grassroots

He stated that PRI had an unshirkable historic and moral duty to mobilize the broad grassroots of Mexican society to maintain national unity.

He went on to say: "The nation's comprehensive development depends more than ever today on political development. With the support of the majority of Mexicans, we members of PRI are going to step up the pace in making our country more independent so that it guarantee its people freedom, justice and democracy in all spheres of society."

He asserted that the Mexican Revolution is alive and well, that its moral strength lies in the doctrine that it espouses and in its efforts for sweeping change and that it also lives on in the minds of all segments of society, in the Mexican people, who are working hard day after day for greater justice and development.

Aguirre Velazquez talked at the outset of his address about the modernization and renovation efforts that organized political society demands. "In order to continue carrying out the institutional revolution that is the essence of our politics, we must today bring up to date the ideological institution that is our party," he stressed.

He explained to those in attendance at the sectional information meeting, held at the local committee headquarters, that it was part of the preparations for the National Assembly in that the committee was putting together the policies that will govern the renovation process and fulfilling its responsibilities as a basic party unit.

Grassroots Demands

"Our goal as members of this party must be to see to it that the list of grassroots demands contained in the General Constitution of the Republic is complied with. During its 55-year existence the party has proven its ability to adapt and remain the vanguard of revolutionary social change. The party's efforts in government have sustained national progress by combining democracy with social justice," he said.

He went on to say that together the people and the government have built a state of laws that harmonizes individual freedoms with the structural imperatives of social rights.

He likewise emphasized that it has been PRI's revolutionary nationalism that has preserved for our country a legacy of service to society, which can be seen in its extensive industry, educational system, farming, health care services and social security system.

Moreover, he continued, "it has salvaged and preserved our own culture as an expression of our national identity and has trained skilled personnel in every social sphere to meet the challenges of development in an independent nation."

He concluded by stating that in these historic times PRI is enthusiastically taking on the commitment to overhaul itself and to make its presence more keenly felt in the collective consciousness because it is convinced of its responsibility as a decisive force for achieving well-being for all Mexicans.

8743

CSO: 3248/568

PAN USE OF TELEVISION, RADIO; PMT REGISTRATION PROBLEMS

Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 8 Apr 84 pp 4-A, 22-A, 28-A

[From "Political Fronts" Column, by Humberto Aranda]

[Text] TV the Key

"One of the keys to the rapid rise in votes for PAN [National Action Party] at the local elections in Durango, Chihuahua, Baja California, Sinaloa and Puebla was the extensive use of television and radio in its campaigns," the PSUM [Unified Socialist Party of Mexico] asserted.

This and other historical, political and ideological factors, the PSUM added, resulted in a growing trend towards a two-party vote, which could already be seen at the 1982 federal elections.

The PSUM took up this issue at the Fourth Plenary Meeting of its Central Committee and voiced its intention of fighting for a Federal Mass Media Law that will put an end "to the virtual private monopoly in the mass media and that will democratize their workings."

The plenum asserted that "the PSUM does not and will not have as much funding available as the PRI and PAN do, and it must struggle for democratization in the use of official funding for political party activities."

The PSUM said it advocated "regulating party privileges" and "drawing up criteria for determining how much funding the government allots to them."

The PSUM voiced the view that private television stations "do not conceal their hostility towards all independent mass activities and towards the people's exercise of their democratic rights, a hostility reinforced by a strong dose of anticommunism and unpatriotic ideology."

"District Delegates Are Persecuting Us," Says PTM [Mexican Workers Party]

The Mexican Workers Party, which is led by Heberto Castillo, said that the authorities in all of the Federal District's political districts

are systematically persecuting it in its campaign to register as a political party.

It claimed that part of the budget of the Benito Juarez district is being used to thwart the party's campaign, because large amounts of paint are being utilized to cover its publicity.

The PMT directly accused representative Maria Eugenia Moreno of violating the constitutional right of freedom of expression.

According to the party, the wall space that is being stolen from it is assigned to PRI.

8743

CSO: 3248/568

BRIEFS

PRI STATE DELEGATES NAMED--Senator Adolfo Lugo Verduzco, president of PRI's CEN [National Executive Committee], named 11 general delegates to that political party, one per state. Reyes Rodolfo Flores Zaragoza, former general delegate of PRI's CEN for Michoacan, was changed to Chiapas. Oscar Ramirez Mijares, former secretary of the National Peasant Confederation (CNC), former senator of the Republic and current federal representative, moves to Guanajuato. Ramon Valdez Chavez, former subsecretary of organization for the PRI, goes to Guerrero. Rafael Ocegueda Ramos, federal representative for Sinaloa, changes to Michoacan. Jose Ramon Martell, former director of the MNJR [National Movement of Revolutionary Youth] and former delegate in Tamaulipas, returns to Oaxaca. Alejandro Lambreton Narro, ex-president of the PRI in Nuevo Leon, special delegate in Mazatlan and federal representative, will go to Aguascalientes. Julio Cesar Mena Brito, former subsecretary of organization of the PRI, goes to Campeche. Carlos Rivera Aceves, ex-delegate in Puebla, will move to Durango. Hilda Anderson Nevarez, former director of the ANFER [National Women's Revolutionary Group], former senator of the Republic, former subsecretary of political training for PRI's CEN and federal representative, will be based in Queretaro. Sami David David, federal representative and former general delegate in Zacatecas, will move to Tlaxcala and Juan Noguera Soto, former PRI director in Guerrero, will go to Zacatecas. [Text] [Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 3 Apr 84 pp 4-A, 26-A] 12472

AREVALO GARDOQUI SEES CALM--The secretary of the interior, Manuel Bartlett, reported that in "Mexico we have the peace that comes from work;" and for his part, General Juan Arevalo Gardoqui, secretary of national defense, pointed out that "the information from the 36 military and naval zones is that the country is calm and dedicated to work." The general also affirmed that, on his arrival, "President Miguel de la Madrid will find the country calm and working." The PRI senator and government officials were interviewed in the presidential hangar, moments after the Mexican Air Force's Boeing 707, TP-01 President Carranza, took off on its flight to South America. On board, Miguel de la Madrid, President of Mexico, began his first foreign diplomatic mission. [Excerpt] [Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 27 Mar 84 pp 1-A, 8-A] 12472

AREVALO GARDOQUI NOTES TRUST--Peace flourishes in Mexico "because the people trust their government," affirmed Juan Arevalo Gardoqui, secretary of defense, in this city. He added that under President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, "our nation is living an era of peace and we Mexicans all know it." Arevalo Gardoqui came to this city to review the construction of the racetrack complex at the La Joya Military Resort, located near here. He indicated that the Mexican army "is fulfilling its promise, which is to safeguard the interests of the country," and he maintained that the peace which now prevails in the republic is due to the trust between the people and the government. The official announced that the riders who will represent Mexico in the coming Olympics in June in Los Angeles, California, will train at the hippodrome. In addition, he said that the army continues its programs against drug traffic and he pointed out that the anti-drug campaign is established in the whole country. [Text] [Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 30 Mar 84 p 25-A] 12472

'AGGRESSION' AGAINST CIOAC PROTESTED--Simojovel, Chiapas--The committee of the Unified Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM) yesterday protested the aggression directed against the peasant farmers who belong to the Independent Central Organization of Agricultural Workers and Peasants (CIAOC). Opposition party leaders asserted that State Public Security personnel attacked local peasants on 24, 25, 26 and 27 February. They also demanded the release of "political prisoners" and of peasant farmers who are fighting for their lands and who have not been treated justly by the country's history, its revolution and its evolution. The PSUM committee denounced the landowners for hiring "white guards" to persecute field workers and for evicting five groups that squatted on local lands because the Agrarian Reform refused to give them a place to work. They will also ask the state government to insure calm in Chiapas fields and to put an end to the repression of independent organizations that are struggling for justice along with the peasant farmers. [Text] [Tuxtla Gutierrez LA VOZ DEL SURESTE in Spanish 10 Mar 84 pp 6, 7] 8743

CSO: 3248/574

NEW VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM REVIEWED IN DETAIL

Basseterre THE DEMOCRAT in English 31 Mar 84 pp 2, 11

[Excerpts of an address by Eugene G. Petty, supervisor of elections on ZIZ Radio and TV, 29 March 1984]

[Text] Last November, the National Assembly passed the House of Assembly Elections Ordinance (Amendment) Act, 1983. This Ordinance repealed or revoked both the provisions in the National Assembly Elections Act for enumeration of voters every five years and an annual revision of voters' list between the first day of February and the thirty-first day of March. The National Assembly Elections Act now provides for a system of continuous registration of voters, whereby every person who is qualified to be registered as a voter may register at any time after becoming qualified.

The Question of Qualification

The system of continuous registration will come into effect from Monday, 2nd April. As such, questions may be asked as to how the system will work or who may qualify to be registered as voters. Within the next few moments, an attempt will be made to address these issues. First, let me begin by looking at the question of qualification. Persons who qualify to be registered as voters fall within two categories.

One category includes citizens of St. Kitts and Nevis of the age of 18 years or upwards, who are domiciled or ordinarily resident in St. Kitts and Nevis.

The other category comprises Commonwealth citizens, of the age of 18 years or upwards, who have resided in St. Kitts and Nevis for a period of 12 months immediately before the date of registration or are domiciled and resident in St. Kitts and Nevis.

It will be noted that mention was made of the need for citizens of St. Kitts and Nevis to be domiciled or ordinarily resident here. As a guide to voters, an explanation of ordinary residence and domicile has been provided in The Election Registration Regulations 1984.

Ordinary residence of a person refers generally to that place which has always been, or which he has adopted as the place of his habitation or home, to which he intends to return, when away from there. This provision suggests that a

person may wish to go abroad from time to time, but still maintain ordinary residence in St. Kitts or Nevis.

Domicile, on the other hand, for the purpose of registration means domicile of origin or domicile of choice in St. Kitts and Nevis. This implies in terms of domicile of origin that a person was born and resides in St. Kitts or Nevis. In the case of domicile of choice, the provision implies that a person may not be born here, but has chosen to settle in St. Kitts or Nevis. In both cases, residence is considered as one of the indices of a person being domiciled.

However, the question as to whether a person is ordinarily resident or domiciled in any electoral district at any period shall be determined by the Registration Officer, taking into account all the facts of the case.

The Application

If a person meets any of the two criteria for qualification to be registered as a voter, he may complete an Application Form (Form No 1). The completed Application should be submitted in person to the Registration Officer for the constituency in which one is registering as a voter.

It would be extremely useful if applicants submit to the Registration Officer a birth certificate, along with the application. This will facilitate the speedy processing of all applications. The Registration Officer, after satisfying himself of the applicant's eligibility for registration, will issue a Certificate of Registration to the person he has registered. In order to satisfy himself that an applicant qualifies to be registered, the Registration Officer may also request the person to take an oath or present a passport.

Registration Officers

There will be four (4) Registration Officers open in St. Kitts and two (2) in Nevis.

Registration Officers for Electoral Districts of St. Kitts are:

Mr Leonard O'Loughlin	--Electoral Districts (1) and (2) (Basseterre-East and Bird Rock; and Basseterre-Central).
Mr Cecil Edward	--Electoral Districts (3) and (4) (Basseterre-West to Challengers; and Old Road to Sandy Point-East)
Mr Ishmael Hodge	--Electoral Districts (5) and (6) (Sandy Point-West to Dieppe Bay; and Parsons to Lodge Village)
Mr Claude Edwards	--Electoral District (7) Lodge Site to Conaree; and St. Peter's)

For the Electoral Districts of Nevis, the Registration Officers are:

Mr Ivor Walters	--Electoral District (8) (Parishes of St. John, Figtree; St. Paul, Charlestown; and St. Thomas Low Land or Cox Village to Cotton Ground)
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Mr Charles Richards --Electoral District (9) (Parishes of St. George, Gingerland; and St. James Windward or Newcastle to Chicken Stone, Gingerland).

Assistant Registration Officers will also be appointed to assist the Registration Officers in the performance of their duties, taking into account the fact that Registration Officers may not always be present, due to ill health or emergencies.

New Electoral Boundaries

The system of continuous voter registration will be conducted on the basis of the existing nine (9) electoral districts in St. Kitts and Nevis. The new electoral boundaries, involving eleven (11) constituencies, for which provisions are made in the Constituency Boundaries Order of 1983, will only come into effect upon the next dissolution of the National Assembly.

First Two Months

During the first two months of operation of the system, the Registration Officers will conduct registration from centres located at convenient points in their electoral districts. In addition, from time to time, announcements will be made about special registration in various areas of constituencies. This arrangement is especially designed to facilitate persons residing in the rural areas.

Registration will be conducted daily, Monday to Friday with effect from April 2, at the following places and time for the persons residing in the various electoral districts: (See Voter Registration Notice on Back Page).

After the first two months of operation, all persons in St. Kitts who qualify as voters will be registered at the Electoral Office at East Square Street, Basseterre, and those in Nevis at the Electoral Office, Chapel Street, Charles-town. Persons who qualify to be registered as voters may obtain application forms at the Electoral Offices, Police Stations and Post Offices in both St. Kitts and Nevis.

Claims and Objections

Other forms concerning voter registration, such as claim forms and forms for objections, may also be obtained at the Electoral Offices, Police Stations and Post Offices. Claim forms (Form No 7) should be completed by persons whose name, address or occupation are entered incorrectly in the Register of Voters. Objection may be made to any person whose name appears on the Register of Voters or Monthly List for an Electoral District by any person whose name appears on the said Register or List. Such objection should be made by completing a Notice of Objection (Form No 8). Completed claim and objection forms should be delivered to the Registration Officer at the main centres of operations mentioned earlier or sent to the registration Officer in care of the Electoral Office not later than ten (10) days after the posting of the Register of Voters or the Monthly List.

Register of Voters and Monthly List

The Register of Voters, with existing names of persons who are registered as voters, will be posted along with a Notice of Revision on Sunday April 1 at two convenient and conspicuous places in each polling division of the present electoral districts. Persons who wish to submit claims or objections with respect to names appearing on the Register of Voters should submit the necessary completed forms to Registration Officers not later than Wednesday April 11.

In the case of claims and objections regarding persons whose names appear on the Monthly List, such forms may be submitted to the Registration Officer after Tuesday May 15, when the Monthly List for April is expected to be published. The Monthly List will consist of persons whose names appear on the Register of Voters and who have notified the Registration Officer of a change of address within an electoral district or to another electoral district. It will also include qualified voters of the age of eighteen (18) years and upwards who have been registered.

The names of persons who have submitted claims, and those to whose registration or claim notice of objection has been given, will be published by the Registration Officer. The Registration Officer will send notices to the persons affected by objection and advise such persons of the time and place at which claims and objections will be considered by him. Agents of political parties shall be entitled to be present during the consideration of claims or objections.

Revised Monthly Lists

On completion of the consideration of objections, the Registration Officer will prepare a Revised Monthly List by omitting those names of persons on the Monthly List to which objections were allowed and adding claims upheld in respect of persons whose names did not appear on the Monthly List or the Register. The Revised Monthly List will be published in each polling division of the electoral districts. Revised Monthly Lists for the month of April is expected to be published by the end of May.

Cooperation and Support

It should be recognised, from what I have outlined that the implementation of the system of continuous registration, involving the processing of applications, claims, objections and the preparation of monthly and revised lists, will be a tremendous exercise. The kind cooperation and support of the general public is therefore solicited, in order to ensure that the new system operates smoothly.

Penalties for Offences

The National Assembly Elections Act does provide penalties for offences committed in respect of the operation of the system. The Act stipulates penalties for persons who have not obtained the age of eighteen years and willfully

submit applications to be registered. Penalties are also provided for persons who object to the names of others on false grounds or knowingly make false statements for the purpose of being registered as voters. In light of the provision of these penalties for offences and the need to ensure that the system of continuous registration operates effectively, the importance of the cooperation of the general public cannot be overemphasized.

I therefore call on all concerned persons to assist the staff of the Electoral Office, and the Registration Officers in particular, in the impartial performance of their duties.

CSO: 3298/754

LABOR . ACCUSES GOVERNMENT OF VIOLATING VOTING RIGHTS

Basseterre THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN in English 17 Mar 84 p 1

[Text] The government of St. Kitts is willfully and maliciously disobeying the Constitution of St. Kitts and Nevis and is willfully and maliciously disobeying the law governing elections in St. Kitts--the House of Assembly Elections Act.

As a result thousands of young people aged 18 years, 19 years, 20 years and 21 years and other persons whose names were not on the 1983 list of voters but who are now entitled to vote under the 1983 Constitution, have been denied and continue to be denied the right to be registered as voters.

Section 29(2) of the Constitution states that persons aged 18 years and over have the right to be registered as voters--as from 19 September 1983.

Section 41 A(2) of the House of Assembly Elections Act, which came into effect on 10 May 1952 and which is still in effect, commands that a revision of the voters lists is to take place between 1 February and 31 March every year.

During that revision the names of persons entitled to be registered must be added to the list and the names of dead persons and persons not entitled to be registered must be removed from the list.

Although Section 41 A(2) of the House of Assembly Elections Act is still the law of the land, no revision of the list of voters has been taking place between 1 February and 31 March this year.

The 18 year old and other young people whose names should be added to the list of voters for 1984, between 1 February and 31 March 1984, have not been given the opportunity to put their names on the list of voters.

This is a blatant and dangerous contravention of the Constitution and of the Elections Laws.

A law called "The House of Assembly Elections Ordinance (Amendment) Act 1983 was passed in the National Assembly on 1 November 1983 to provide for a system of continuous voter registration, but that law is not yet in force.

When Labour Members of the National Assembly made inquiries yesterday, they were notified that the November 1983 amendment to the Elections Act has not yet come into force.

Therefore, the old system of a revision between 1 February and 31 March is still in effect.

Meanwhile, the present law is being openly and willfully broken and the Constitution is being ignored.

The SPOKESMAN calls on the Electoral Commission and the Registration Officers to take action in defence of the rights of thousands of our people whose rights are being trampled underfoot by a wicked government.

CSO: 3298/754

LABOR ORGAN SEES THREAT TO PAM IN ANGUILLA VOTE

Basseterre THE LABOUR SPOKESMAN in English 17 Mar 84 p 2

[Editorial: "Too Close for Comfort"]

[Text] The results of the general elections in Anguilla a little over a week ago have posed a major worry for the NRP/PAM government in St. Kitts and Nevis.

At the most superficial level perhaps is the concern over the demonstration effect. Anguilla in a manner of speaking, points the way and shows to us their erstwhile brethren what can be done. And from the government's point of view, the whole thing is a little too close for comfort.

We mean this last observation in a number of senses. It is too close for comfort in terms of space. Not only is Anguilla a neighbour barely 60 miles away. But until recently Anguilla was an integral part of our country. To that extent Anguilla is different but not so different.

It is too close for comfort in terms of time. The elections here must follow the elections in Anguilla fairly soon. At the worst, they can be about 12 months apart. And nobody seriously believes the gap will be that long. In earlier issues, both editorial columns and our feature writers have drawn attention to the indicators which testify that the elections are just around the corner.

But even if the elections here are 12 months away from those just held in Anguilla, that is not so long a gap as will dull people's memories to what happened there. And so long as it is there as a reminder the government have to be worried.

In the third place, it is too close for comfort in terms of relationship. There is an obvious and close relationship between the government here and the government that lost power in Anguilla.

Members and top officials of the government here and members of the defeated administration in Anguilla, were conspirators together in 1967 to overthrow by force of arms the lawfully elected government of then Premier Robert Bradshaw.

It is well known that persons from the leadership of PAM in St. Kitts fomented the rebellion which led to the ouster of the State's police from Anguilla in 1967.

And if proof were needed of these facts that proof was supplied by then Chief Minister Webster of Anguilla.

In December 1980, in a ceremony to mark the formal legal separation of Anguilla from the rest of the Associated State, in the presence of then Premier Dr. Simmonds and Dr. Herbert and also in the presence of top-ranking British and American officials Webster authenticated the story of the Anguilla rebellion and the attempted overthrow in St. Kitts.

As if further to cement the relationship between the former government of Anguilla and NRP/PAM regime, they both recognized the same king-maker.

Dr. "Billy" Herbert became at first Constitutional adviser to both governments and commuted regularly between the Valley and Basseterre (and sometimes Charles-town) as a kind of trouble shooter. Latterly, the same Dr. Herbert has been appointed by Dr. Simmonds as his Ambassador plenipotentiary and extraordinary.

In short the present NRP/PAM government cannot afford to ignore the lessons of Anguilla.

One potent lesson is that even a government that is well ensconced has no guarantee of perpetuating itself in office once there are democratic elections that are free and fair and free from fear.

Members of the NRP/PAM government have been known to opine that it is only a foolish government that loses power in elections. What happened in Anguilla should disabuse them of that view.

As we pointed out in our last issue before the elections the Webster government had 5 out of 7 elected seats. Yet they were badly routed at the polls.

By contrast the NRP/PAM government will go into elections with a majority of one.

A second lesson to be learnt is that people will not remain forever hooked on a spurious claim of freedom.

Webster's claim to fame was that he was the liberator and saviour of Anguilla who had delivered her from the clutches of Bradshaw and eventually won from the British her right to legal separation.

But that freedom did not issue into the welfare of Anguilla and the Anguillans. The very freedom they had won was being used to put a yoke about their necks and it was not an easy yoke. Hence the Anguilla National Alliance slogan "Vote the Hand and Save Our Land."

There is a close parallel. Dr. Simmonds is relying on his achievement in presiding over the independence of St. Kitts-Nevis and becoming the First Prime Minister to catapult him back into power.

But the people of St. Kitts-Nevis know they have not benefitted from this newly won freedom. They know that Dr. Simmonds is using the very freedom to barter the birthright of the people. They know that their patrimony is being transferred into the hands of new masters and that the stage is being set for their children and their children's children to live as a displaced and dispossessed people.

And Dr. Simmonds fears the motivation that Anguilla will give to the people of St. Kitts-Nevis.

But perhaps the lesson that Dr. Simmonds fears most is that his mentor, his principal adviser, his power behind the throne, the great Dr. Herbert has lost his glamour and attraction.

No one has ever credited Dr. Simmonds with being an able leader. Even his most sycophantic adherents have only ever claimed that he was "honest and decent." But he was perceived as a surrogate for Billy because it was thought that Billy would never be accepted by the black masses. But the Billy was always the power behind the throne. To the extent that Anguilla marks the beginning of the end for Billy, it represents not just a worry but a significant trauma to Dr. Simmonds and the NRP/PAM coalition.

CSO: 3298/754

LABOR MINISTER MEETS WITH LABOR, BUSINESS LEADERS

Paramaribo DE WARE TIJD in Dutch 16 Mar 84 pp 1, 16

/Text/ At the invitation of the minister of labor, social affairs and public housing, Mr Siegried Gilds, two introductory talks took place on Wednesday, 14 March 1984 between the statesman, the labor movement and employers.

Representatives from the four labor federations--PWO /Progressive Employees Organization/, CLO /Public Servants Organization, Central Council/, C-47 and the Moederbond--took part in the talks between the labor movement and the minister.

The employers were represented by a delegation from the boards of the VSB /Surinamese Trade and Industry Association/ and the ASFA /Association of Surinamese Manufacturers/.

In both talks, which likewise had the character of a working discussion, the minister referred to the contents of Decree A-15, and specifically to the considerations included in it which had led to the establishment of the interim government.

Special Attention

Furthermore, he directed the special attention of the social partners to what is stated in art 1, para 3 of Decree A-15, as follows:

"The ministers of this interim government shall be appointed and dismissed by the president on the recommendation of the military authorities, the labor movement and trade and industry; concerning the labor movement and trade and industry, if and as far as they have designated ministers for the interim cabinet."

/as published/ and art 3, paras a and b, as follows:

a. "the establishment of democratic structures of a lasting nature. This shall take place in common consultation with the military authorities, the labor movement and trade and industry, and with the people and/or bodies which are to be designated by the latter two;"

b. "the laying down of conditions and the creation of adequate possibilities for solving the social, economic and financial problems of the country of Suriname within a reasonable period, at least a basis for making this solution possible."

Based on the passages quoted from this decree, the minister pointed out to the social partners their special joint responsibility with regard to the realization of the tasks to be performed by the interim government.

Three Main Tasks

In order to realize that which is indicated in Decree A-15, art 3, the group of tasks of the Directorate of Labor will be divided into three main tasks, specifically, labor supply, labor relations, labor protection.

In putting into effect the idea of democratization, as stated in Decree A-15, the minister informed both social partners that the policy to be pursued by him with regard to labor and industrial relations will come to pass in close consultation with them.

This cooperation will especially take form in making the Labor Advisory College operational, in which not only the government sits, but the labor movement and trade and industry as well.

Among other things, this college should advise the minister in questions affecting labor relations.

The announcement by the minister concerning the Labor Advisory College was received with satisfaction by both the labor movement and trade and industry.

In conclusion, it can be stated that these first talks with the social partners were carried out in a very good atmosphere.

12271

CSO: 3214/29

EVALUATION OF MOEDERBOND INTERIM ADMINISTRATION CONDUCTED

Paramaribo DE WARE TIJD in Dutch 16 Mar 84 p 7

/Text/ As of Tuesday, 13 March, the interim board of directors of the Moederbond has existed for exactly 1 year.

In connection with this, the board held a meeting Tuesday evening with the leaders and activists of the member unions affiliated with the Moederbond. At this meeting, an evaluation was made of the interim board's 1 year in office under the leadership of Frederik van Russel.

High Points

The following high points were brought up during the meeting:

- The reopening of the Moederbond building on Coppenamestraat.
- The continued maintenance of relations between the Moederbond and labor organizations abroad.
- The realization of the fact that the labor movement in Suriname has continued to exist after the difficult days of December 1982.
- Understanding with the government has been reached more quickly than expected. The Moederbond, together with the other labor federation, has succeeded in shouldering responsibility in governing within 14 months.
- Installation of a women's wing of the Moederbond.

Meeting of Boards of Directors

It was also decided at the meeting that the member unions will determine how long the term of office of this interim Moederbond board will be at the meeting of boards of directors which is to be held this coming 1 April at the Jan Starke Center at Zanderij.

The complete boards of the 53 member unions are invited to the meeting of the boards of directors. The most important points on the agenda at this meeting are: Report by the Secretary General on the period from January 1982 to

March 1983. Report by the Union Treasurer on the period from March to December 1983 and on the period from January 1982 to March 1983.

Determination of term of office of the interim board and discussion of 1 May festivities.

Social Democratic Women's Union [SDV]

As announced earlier, the board of the Moederbond installed a women's wing of the Moederbond Tuesday evening. Mr Frederik van Russel, chairman of the Moederbond, says the following about it:

The Social Democratic Women's Union was a cofounder of the Moederbond in 1952. The first chairman was Mrs Sasa Tammes. Affiliated with this Women's Union were the Cleaning Women's Union and the Market Women's Union. Over the years, all of these unions have fallen off. With the installation of the SDV, we want to try to bring all these unions back into the Moederbond.

Goals and Tasks of the SDV

The Social Democratic Women's Union, Van Russel continued, will have as its goal to unite the women of Suriname, and especially the working women of Suriname.

Their task will be to seek solutions to the socioeconomic problems of the Suriname woman. The seat of the SDV will be in Paramaribo, but its members will be spread all over Suriname. According to Van Russel, there are enough women working somewhere who are not in a women's association which can promote their interests. I am thinking here of shop girls who work somewhere where there is no union and of servant girls who each work for a different employer. All of these people now have the opportunity to unite in the SDV. The board is as follows: Evellen Esajas, chairman; E. Mijns, vice chairman; P. Dundas, secretary; A. Vervuurt, second secretary; C. Tjon A Jong, treasurer; and Mrs J. Dodson and Mrs M. Biswane, commissioners. Mrs M. Plettenberg and Frederik van Russel serve as advisors.

12271

CSO: 3214/29

UDENHOUT WARNS AGAINST 'BEGGAR,' 'SLAVE' MENTALITIES ON AID

Paramaribo DE WARE TIJD in Dutch 22 Mar 84 p 1

/Text/ With reference to questions concerning Dutch development aid, Prime Minister Dr Wim Udenhout said yesterday at a press conference that Suriname development plans are not being adjusted according to the statements, points of view and plans of the Dutch Government.

Correction

"If our plans, our goals induce the Netherlands to take certain positions not in the interest of our development, then we regret that, and are attempting in all dignity to show a correction in them where possible. We are trying to set a dialogue in motion," the prime minister said.

He said that it is good that Suriname society realize what the funds from the development agreement with the Netherlands mean and what they do not mean.

The prime minister: "It would be good for our long-term development if everyone realized that even if aid were restored today, that part of our problems would be solved, but not the largest part."

Beggar Mentality

The prime minister said that we must get away from the idea which is beginning to take form in the minds of many people that Suriname's problems are to be solved from the outside. If we do not correct this, it means the development of a beggar mentality. He further remarked that we cannot do without support from a broad, certainly not in this phase of our development. "And it is good to turn your eyes to means to which you have a right, on which you make an historical claim.

"But it is also good to realize that the largest part of your problems right now cannot be solved by aid from the Netherlands or by an IMF loan."

The leader of the government said that we must take the line that obtaining development aid or a loan certainly does not necessarily mean that we no longer need to economize.

"We must realize that with extreme discipline, we can solve our problems. We must have budgetary discipline. This is not only a matter for the government, but for all of society, budgetary discipline in the family as well," the prime minister said.

He indicated that we must ascertain whether the things that we want to have at home are indeed necessary.

Friends

The prime minister said further that funds from the Netherlands will run out. "If you put off tapping into new development possibilities, put off making new friends in the world, then you are really still a slave. And it is quite a shame that we must still actually confirm that many people, in their fanaticism to want to do everything with the aid from the Netherlands, display somewhat of a slave mentality. And that is probably undesirable."

Prime Minister Edenhout hoped that in the short run, Dutch matter-of-factness and sobriety will prevail in the issue of development cooperation.

12271

CSO: 3214/28

MOEDERBOND LEADER VAN RUSSEL CALLS FOR SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENT

Paramaribo DE WARE TIJD in Dutch 26 Mar 84 pp 1, 10

/Text/ The chairman of the "Moederbond," Frederik van Russel, has appealed to his fellow labor union leaders to grant the government the peace it needs in order to accomplish its tasks as they should be done.

With this, privateers are likewise caught dead in their tracks. Van Russel reminded that this cabinet will have to remain in office until at the latest 31 December of this year. However, the Moederbond is of the opinion that this government will also have to provide leadership to the country after that date, because it can never been that a governing team steps forward to smooth the way for others. "Efoe no srefi regering diesi no kon baka, na moeilijkheid..." /Sranan dialect/, he said.

Homage

Van Russel spoke at a meeting called by his labor federation to give labor union ministers Siegfried Gilds and Allan Li Fo Sjoë the chance to inform their supporters about their policy. Government figures and the interim board of the "Moederbond," which was installed a year ago, were paid homage by the "Social Democratic Women's Union." The ministers, Chairman Van Russel and Secretary Romeo van Russel were each presented with a floral bouquet.

Mrs Evie Esajas, chairman of the Women's Union, voiced the opinion of her members and stated that the interim board has acted courageously and had survived all attempts at liquidation directed at the labor federation. It was likewise this board that helped the "Moederbond" through the difficult period. Later, Minister Gilds would likewise convey his congratulations to the interim leadership. He seized the opportunity to remark that the entire labor movement was gone through a difficult time. In this respect, the minister emphasized unity, which is no necessary, on the level of the labor unions as well.

Support

Chairman Van Russel expressed his thanks for the homage, made more lustrous by choral trumpet music. He pointed out that the board of the Moederbond meets regularly with the boards of its affiliate unions. However, these leaders do

not maintain close contact with their members, and this must be changed. The chairman of the federation also emphasized at this meeting the support by the entire labor movement for the government. He pointed out that there were four labor federations which together had to nominate two ministers, and that this took place in great harmony. It is consequently no wonder that Ministers Gilds and Li Fo Sjoe meet every 2 weeks with the four labor federation heads. It is intended that periodical consultation between the entire management of the labor federations and the ministers take place. Van Russel said that the labor movement took governing responsibility at a time when the country was threatening to drift off into the depths. He cited as problems the growing unemployment (graduates who cannot find work) and the loss of development aid. He appealed to the entire population to tighten their belts.

Trip

Around 9 April, a labor union delegation will leave for the Netherlands to discuss with the Federation of Dutch Labor Unions /FNV/ the resumption of aid to the Suriname labor movement. The Moederbond will send a consolidated delegation which is to have talks with the International Association of Free Labor Unions /IVVV/ in Brussels. The purpose of this discussion is to point out to the IVVV, which last year denounced Suriname, that the labor movement in our country can operate freely, and that it thus no longer makes sense to assume a negative attitude. The "Moederbond" has the exact same attitude with regard to the American labor movement. Contact with the IVVV is especially important, Van Russel explained, because that association has branches around the world.

Bruynzeel

Van Russel discussed the changes in staff that have been made at the Minister of Labor, among other places. He remarked that what happened there was nothing more than the rehabilitation of loyal top officials (E. Sion and Mr H. Hermelijn), who had been pushed aside in favor of RVP /Revolutionary People's Party/ functionaries. Van Russel impressed upon the gathering that the Moederbond was not in a comfortable position with the minister, and that things are even being done against the labor federation. The association leader said that his labor federation has "many enemies." As an example he named Bruynzeel Suriname. "We even have opponents on the Bruynzeel board of directors," he said. He clarified this by saying that, as head of the labor federation with which the Bruynzeel Employees Organization /BWO/ is affiliated, he had wanted to get his bearings on the damage suffered as a result of the recent fire. He had reported to the board of directors, but had been told that they were in a meeting with the Council of Commissioners and that he would have to wait. In view of his experience with this type of situation, he decided, accompanied by former BWO head Henri Blom, to take a look at the area where the fire had raged. Shortly thereafter, Blom was given to understand by the management of the company that his behavior had been undisciplined, and that he should have stayed in his place.

Advisor

Bruynzeel Suriname has given its cooperation by lending staff member Jamoena Jhawnie to the labor movement, which has appointed him as top advisor to Minister Gilds. Jhawnie had actually been destined to become minister, but another candidate was chosen.

Jhawnie has retained his salary and all fringe benefits at Bruynzeel. He has let it be known that he will occupy his post as advisor until the end of this year at the latest. He begins in his new role today.

BRIEFS

C-47 OFFICIAL RETURNS FROM CUBA--Jules Vrede, member of the board of directors of C-47, who attended the 15th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions /CTC/, returned to Suriname Saturday evening. Participants at the congress, which lasted from 22 through 24 February 1984, numbered 2,800, of which 184 represented 115 organizations in 86 countries. Jules Vrede is very satisfied with the progress and the results of the congress, which had as its main goal "the motivation and stimulation of workers to produce more." The congress was opened by the chairman of the CTC, Mr Rosario Fernandes Perera, while the president of Cuba, Fidel Castro, did the closing. In his final remarks, the Cuban leader said that women in Cuba constitute the great power of the revolution. The participation of women in the revolutionary process is enormous. Before 1986, Cuba will turn out 50,000 doctors, of which 30,000 are women. The Cuban leader called on the workers of the Caribbean area and Latin America to form a unity. to raise one fist, because it is the workers who must have their way in this region. One of the resolutions of the congress concerned the invasion of Grenada by American troops. The congress stated that sovereignty is an inalienable right of every nation and that a single other power may injure the integrity of the nation. That no intervention or interference, and certainly no armed intervention can be condoned. /Text/ /Paramaribo DE WARE TIJD in Dutch 6 Mar 84 p 1/ 12271

LABOR LEADERS INVITED TO USSR--The ambassador of the USSR to our country recently invited, on behalf of the Russian Labor movement, the boards of directors of the labor federations to send four delegates to the 1 May celebration in Moscow. The costs of travel and accommodations will be assumed by the Soviet Council of Trade Unions. The labor leaders will spend 2 weeks in the Soviet Union. The labor federations reacted favorably to this invitation. /Text/ /Paramaribo DE WARE TIJD in Dutch 1 Mar 84 p 1/ 12271

RICE PROCESSING MACHINERY DEVELOPED--The engineering firm H. N. van Dijk N. V. in Nickerie has in the last year developed two machines for rice drying and rice hulling plants. They are the "Vadini Aspirator" for use in hulling plants to blow out rice husks and the "rice cleaner" for cleaning the rice in the dryer or hulling plant. The latter is available in capacities of 7 tons, 10 tons and 20 tons an hour, while a machine with a 30 ton capacity is under study at the moment. These two machines are presently imported and demand high freight charged because of their large volume. Since it was founded in 1933, the firm has concentrated first and foremost at its construction facility on the repair

and development of equipment and machinery for domestic agriculture and hulling operations. But when, in 1965, mechanized rice farming got under way at other companies, and especially in small-scale farming, machines were developed which were either peculiar to Suriname or modeled after machines developed elsewhere. Development in agriculture had to be coupled with industrial activities. At that time, the facility manufactured water pumps, operated by a trigger, dump trucks for rice transport, the mud roller /modderol/ and the drainage wheel as machines peculiar to Suriname, in which technology was applied to the situation in Suriname. Van Dijk played a major role in the development of the binder-dryer /binddroger/. Through assembly and local construction, it developed the "Crop Diesel Dryer" and the electric fan together with the air heater. These three machines are used in many of the small and large rice drying plants in Nickerie. As a result of this development, Suriname binddrogers are now entirely mechanized. Through the construction these agricultural machines, a considerable contribution is being made to savings in foreign currency and employment is again being created in Nickerie. At the moment, the number of workers at the construction facility totals 23. /Text/ /Paramaribo DE WARE TIJD in Dutch 24 Mar 84 p 12/ 12271

CSO: 3214/28

BACKGROUND TO MARTINEAU'S ELECTION AS PNM DEPUTY CHIEF

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 16 Apr 84 p 1

[Text] Attorney General and Minister for Legal Affairs Senator Russel Martineau, was yesterday formally and properly elected First Vice-Chairman of the People's National Movement (PNM).

Works Minister Hugh Francis, who over the past fortnight had been threatening to make a fight of it, declined, stating that he wanted to see the party progress, and as such, would not contest against his "fellow Minister brother."

When Senator Martineau was first proposed, the matter went contrary to the regulations. There was no formal resignation by Mr Pitt before the General Council, neither was the matter listed on the agenda and members circularised.

It was, however, announced after the meeting that Senator Martineau was elected to fill the vacancy of Vice-Chairman.

Mr Francis on two occasions made bids for the post--first at the 1982 annual convention of the party and again earlier this year in the run-up to the 1983 convention.

When Mr Francis made his first bid in 1982, election to the post was quashed because there was no resignation by Mr Pitt, who then was appointed High Commissioner to the Eastern Caribbean.

When the post was due for election at the 1983 convention held last February, Mr Francis made his second bid, but in preparations leading up to the convention, the Political Leader, Mr George Chambers, expressed dissatisfaction with the slate of proposed candidates.

He asked the General Council to cancel the list and postpone the elections to later this year--September--when the 1984 convention will be held.

A New Image

Mr Chambers had served notice for the second time that it was time the party be given a new image, hence when he proposed Senator Martineau in February, it was seen as a deliberate move to keep Mr Francis out.

Party sources indicated that there was another side to the argument.

In anticipation that party Chairman Francis Prevatt would throw in the towel later this year, the way would be clear for Senator Martineau to be elevated to the post of Chairman.

When Senator Martineau's election to the post of Vice-Chairman was announced last month, there was a flurry of queries, since there was no resignation from Mr Pitt before the General Council. Since then, Mr Pitt tendered his resignation. General Council members were circularised and the vacancy listed on the agenda for the meeting.

Yesterday, at Balisier House--party headquarters--Mr Prevatt informed members that one week after the last General Council meeting he received Mr Pitt's letter of resignation. As a result, he was in a position to receive nominations to fill the post of Vice-Chairman.

Mrs Muriel Donawa-McDavidson, nominated Senator Martineau, and the proposal was seconded by Mrs Lucille Belmontes of the Diego Martin East constituency.

CSO: 3298/741

HUDSON-PHILLIPS TO LEAD ONR STUDY TEAM TO GRENADA

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 18 Apr 84 p 3

[Text] A team of senior officials of the Organisation for National Reconstruction (ONR) led by Political Leader Karl Hudson-Phillips, is going to Grenada to report the "true facts" of the political situation in the Spice-Island which went through a political crisis last year.

Mr Hudson-Phillips made this announcement while addressing a public meeting of the ONR at Adam Smith Square, Port-of-Spain on Monday night.

Reminding his audience that at the ONR's last annual convention a resolution was passed that he as Political Leader should visit Grenada, Mr Hudson-Phillips said: "I am sure you will agree that the time has come when as leader of the ONR and the only party that did not involve itself in Mr Chambers's comess in October of 1983, that the visit should now be made.

"We are not going to wait on Mr Chambers's bipartisan committee where I understand he is planning to send a retired judge as chairman. I understand he is planning to send a sportsman, a youth man...when what the people need is help.

"The thing is you have to send economists, administrators. You have to send lawyers to help the people. We in the ONR will investigage practical things...how to help the Grenadians..."

An official at ONR headquarters yesterday said the mission would be leaving Trinidad "very soon."

As to whether the party had locus standi (referring to Prime Minister Chambers's remarks during his San Fernando visit about the party having no parliamentary presence), Mr Hudson-Phillips said the ONR would hold demonstration outside Trinidad and Tobago Television.

The demonstration would indicate that the ONR was a voice to be heard in 1984 and would protest TTT's discriminatory practices against Opposition parties, he said.

He complained that the ONR got three ten-minute broadcast periods per year when every night on TTT Panorama programme some Minister could be seen opening a road--ten years late.

"When the Prime Minister goes to San Fernando with the Naparima Bowl seven years burnt down, no talk to San Fernando about a second television station, no talk about the state of the hospital.

"And I understand the nurses say 'he coming to see' and they put two people in a bed for him to see the chaotic situation. The sad part about it is to put two people on a bed they had to take those up from lying on the ground in the corridor and put them on the bed so he could see."

Lung Cancer

On the housing situation, Mr Hudson-Phillips was critical of the Malabar Housing project. He said the homeowners were being taken advantage of. He said that based on the 30-year mortgage, they would end up paying something like \$430,000 for a house costing \$161,000 up front.

He added: "And they are paying mortgage on a house that cannot last 30 years. The external walls are not concrete, but gypsum board. The residents are saying they have information the board can give lung cancer.

"Because the residents wrote the Minister of Housing on this matter, the Minister said: 'This is large scale corruption!' He said every housing scheme is subsidised by Government. But I say subsidising inefficiency... subsidising corruption, because the Chin Lee contract was investigated by William Demas."

CSO: 3298/741

ROBINSON VIEWS CARIBBEAN UNITY, DEVOLUTION FOR TOBAGO

Conference on Democracy Speech

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 17 Apr 84 p 18

[Text] "Self determination in the Caribbean context is an extremely complex concept and cannot be expressed in the simplistic terms of federation or unitary state."

This was stated by Chairman of the Tobago House of Assembly, Mr A.N.R. Robinson, as he addressed the National Alliance conference on "Forging A New Democracy" at Valsayn Teachers' College.

He spoke on the topic "Unity and Change in the Caribbean Region: The Need for New Mechanisms." The paper was delivered two years ago, he said, at a conference in Mexico.

Mr Robinson dealt on the failure of the West Indian Federation, the problem of Caribbean identity, the shift away from concepts such as federation, confederation and unitary state, to decentralisation, devolution, autonomy and participatory democracy. He also commented on Trinidad and Tobago as an example of the failure of the unitary state and put forward the case for devolution in Tobago.

The Caribbean, he said, perhaps more than any region in the world, was and continues to be subject "to the contrary forces of integration and fragmentation." In the past, he said, "imperial rivalries" were the dominant factor and for centuries external influences "decisively determined the interplay of these forces."

Work Out Destiny

He said: "division is reflected in the many mini and micro-states; dependence in the lack of real economic control, the complete reliance on external technologies, sources of knowledge and forms of social and economic organisation. Their history has been one of repression and revolt. No indigenous political, social and economic institutions subsist as in Asia and Africa."

It was against this background, he said, that the Caribbean peoples of the latter part of the 20th century were seeking to work out their own destiny. He quoted William Demas as saying that this destiny "certainly for all the English-speaking countries of the Eastern Caribbean ought to be sought within a single political collectivity if such self-determination is to be of any real meaning." But Mr Demas also noted, he said, that there must be arrangement for autonomy and/or administrative decentralisation in the individual islands.

The concepts of security and self-determination were inescapably linked, he said, noting that "the right of the Caribbean people to self determination must, therefore, be the focal point of any discussions on the security of the Caribbean region. Self determination in the Caribbean context is an extremely complex concept and cannot be expressed in the simplistic terms of federation and unitary state."

The task before the Caribbean, he added, was to "devise political and other mechanisms to match the diversity and complexity of situations."

Attention, he said, had shifted from concepts such as federation, confederation and unitary state, to decentralisation, devolution, autonomy and participatory democracy. There was growing awareness that flexibility and creativity in political systems and institutions were the viable alternatives to fragmentation and political disunity among peoples.

The problem, he said, now needs to be approached in an "increasingly systematic manner if the region is to come to serious grips with self-determination, security, unity and economic and social progress." He then went on to focus on Trinidad and Tobago as a case study for the region.

During the debate on the Federation, he said, Trinidad and Tobago was held up as a model to the smaller islands of the relationship which could exist between the various communities and between the larger and smaller islands, but he described this as more of a "political manifesto, a statement of intent, an expression of the emotion of a nationalist leader and contender for the leadership of the federation."

The two islands, he said, were governed separately for hundreds of years and it was only in 1898 that there was an absolute amalgamation of the two colonies where Tobago was to be the ward of the colony of Trinidad.

Frustration

The issue of the relationship between the two islands was discussed many times and gave rise to the debate on internal self-government or autonomy which continued to today, Mr Robinson said. In the 1950s, the model for the unitary state was Trinidad and Tobago, but "today the very structure of that unitary state has come under serious re-examination."

Mr Robinson then outlined the case for devolution in Tobago, the reasons behind it, and how the process was actually carried out, outlining as well the legislation which allowed for the establishment of the House of Assembly. He also noted some of the problems of the Act, the "incoherent nature of the legislation," which could cause the devolution exercise to be completely frustrated.

Panday Remarks

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 17 Apr 84 p 3

[Text] When a constitution permits the ruling party or the political directorate to use the State-owned and State-controlled media to perpetuate itself in power without any sanctions, then that constitution is not worth the document it is written on.

Opposition Leader Basdeo Panday told this to participants at the closing session of the two-day "Forging a new Democracy" conference at the Valsayn Teachers' College on Sunday evening.

According to Mr Panday, if a constitution does not permit the promotion of such a diversified culture as found in Trinidad and Tobago, that constitution is also not worth the paper it is printed on.

He saw the conference as the first step in the struggle for a political and constitutional framework which would determine the future direction of Trinidad and Tobago and stressed that the people "must go beyond the boundary."

"In Trinidad and Tobago, beyond the boundary is both physical and mental. It involves shaking off the mental shackles of colonialism...there are still too many of us who do not know the difference between slavery and freedom.

"If going beyond the political boundary may seem difficult, we must not despair as 27 years in the life of a nation is but a short period. Nations are not build overnight but by years of struggle."

Closing the symposium organised by the National Alliance and the Trinidad and Tobago Institute of the West Indies, was the conference Chairman Rev Dr Roy Neehall, former General Secretary of the Caribbean Conference of Churches.

Dr Neehall said that Trinidad and Tobago, like most developing countries, was suffering from a serious deficiency in its body politic characterised by a large gap between political education and political action.

Must Be Shaken

It was far easier, he argued, to strategise than to engage in the practicals by which one could achieve one's goals.

Dr Neehall, who is a consultant to churches in America and Canada on Caribbean affairs, added that not too many people were willing to pay the price of engaging in concerted action.

He added: "It will not be easy to achieve one of the essential goals of forging a new democracy and that is to make it exceedingly uncomfortable for the party that has occupied the seat of power for as many years, and unless they feel they are seriously threatened, not just by an alternative in terms of the assumption of power, but an alternative in terms of the concept people have of what is good government, they will continue to walk in these corridors of self-confidence and pompous arrogance.

The Sunday before the 1981 general elections, the headline in one of the newspapers said that the ONR is expected to win 16 seats. I took this headline to a foundation member of the PNM for his analysis. He said: I will now tell you the facts.

"He said: 'On the basis of our membership we have already won 21 seats; we are unsure about five; DAC will win two no doubt and the ULF will get eight.'

"I don't have to tell you that because of the tremendous confidence in a membership built up not necessarily on what you might call sound programmes, but a membership that has been built up, there is this confidence that must be shaken.

CSO: 3298/741

SMALL BUSINESSMEN SEEK PRIVATE SECTOR 'SHADOW CABINET'

Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 17 Apr 84 p 6

[Text] The Small Business Federation of Trinidad and Tobago has suggested the setting up of a "shadow cabinet" by private sector to come to grips with the many problems in the country.

The suggestion from the federation was made at the weekend when officials of the organisation met the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

President of the federation, Mr Sydney Braithwaite, explained that goals of the federation were identical to those of the chamber.

He said: "We all seek to provide more jobs. We all seek to improve the economic climate of our country. We seek to make reasonable returns on our investments and as an organisation we seek to ensure that our members achieve these goals.

Mr Braithwaite said that the federation advocated more visible, coherent, cohesive contributions by the private sector to the social, economical and political areas of the nation.

Mr Braithwaite explained: "We believe that all facets of the private sector (including the SBF) should get off the fence, come together and face up to the threats posed to our way of life caused by the downturn in the economy.

"By seriously pooling our resources we could at least minimise the adverse effects.

He suggested that private sector organisations should together set up a "shadow cabinet" that would come to grips with the problems that beset Trinidad and Tobago and make their findings and recommendations available to the Government.

He mentioned exports, agriculture and management of the nation's finances as the immediate issues.

CSO: 3298/742

NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL NAMES INTERIM CHIEF

Port-of-Spain EXPRESS in English 5 Apr 84 p 3

[Text] Vice-Chairman of the National Productivity Council, Joe Pires, has been appointed interim chairman of the council, a decision taken at a meeting at Salvatori Building, Port of Spain yesterday afternoon.

Following a 45-minute discussion among council members, Pires later informed members of the news media that no member of the council was prepared to accept the post as "chairman" up to yesterday.

Also introduced on an interim basis was an internal five-man committee of the council comprising Dr Selwyn Ryan, Bolton Demas, Oswald Talbot-Paul, Dr Neave Beckles and Pires. Up to meeting time yesterday, Pires said that the five-man team had not yet been delegated specific duties.

Pires stated that the interim period would end on May 31 when it is hoped a permanent chairman would be elected.

Pires said that Council members were unable to commit themselves to chairmanship as everyone was busy with his or her own "private affairs."

He claimed that he, too, was very busy and could not perform as a permanent chairman.

Yesterday's meeting of the council was called primarily to select a new chairman following a resignation by former chairman Dr Ralph Henry, two weeks ago.

Following his resignation from the council, Henry had told the EXPRESS that he was prompted to quit the council after the Prime Minister had criticised it for being "political." Chambers's "passing criticism," as it was referred to by the interim vice-chairman, late last week, was allegedly expressed at a meeting with the Trade Union Congress and later relayed to Henry.

Questioned about the Prime Minister's allegation yesterday, Pires said that although Henry wore "several caps" he was very careful with which cap he spoke when dealing with the council.

"But I do not think he ever expressed a view different to the Council's," Pires said, adding that if during the productivity campaign there appeared anything political "we're sorry."

One member yesterday stated that the council did not wish to be dragged into a debate with the Prime Minister and Henry, as there had yet to be a clarification as to what was actually said by the Prime Minister.

Pires said that about two weeks ago the council regretfully accepted Henry's resignation "as the council can only assume a lot of thought went into it."

CSO: 3298/742

GOVERNMENT PROBING CHARGES OF TEXACO TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA

Port-of-Spain EXPRESS in English 10 Apr 84 p 1

[Text]

TEXACO Trinidad Limited is one of two companies being investigated by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for suspected trading with South Africa.

Ambassador Serge Elie Charles, of Haiti, head of the delegation from the United Nations-sponsored Council for Namibia which is visiting Trinidad and Tobago, said at a news conference yesterday that two cases of trade with the apartheid state emanating from this country was under investigation by the government.

Asked to expand on the statement after the conference, Charles said that one of the companies involved was Texaco, but he could not recall the other.

Earlier, in response to a question, the ambassador said his council would be willing to take up the question of trading links between South Africa and locally based companies if sufficient evidence was produced to substantiate such claims.

Charles is at the head of a seven member multi-national mission which is on a tour of Latin America and the Caribbean to mobilise support for the Namibian struggle and to seek effective ways of countering the strong challenge mounted by South Africa against the international community on the question of Namibia.

The ambassador said that the delegation had held fruitful talks with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and agreement had been reached in several areas.

Included in those areas was a request by Trinidad and Tobago that the South West African Peoples' Organisation (SWAPO) submit a list of suitably qualified Namibians, who could be granted scholarships at institutions in this country.

Charles said that the last Namibian who had come to this country under a previous agreement had left in 1981. The Haitian diplomat said that the politics of destabilisation had forced Angola and Mozambique to sign non-aggression pacts with the racist regime in Pretoria.

Helmut Angula, the SWAPO representative on the delegation, said that the recent release from prison of Herman Toivo Jatoivo, a founder member of the organisation, by the South African authorities was an attempt to boost the election chances of U.S. President Ronald Reagan.

Angula said that Jatoivo's release after 18 years was also aimed at creating friction within SWAPO and was a move to convince Angola, Mozambique and other front line states that South Africa was genuine in her moves to establish a rapprochement with them.

BRIEFS

DRAGNET ARRESTS--Thirty persons are to appear in Court after being caught in a Police dragnet over the weekend. In anti-drug operation "King Pin" mounted by Police Commissioner Randolph Burroughs, the south-western peninsula from Cedros to La Brea was sealed off with road blocks and alert at the beaches. A popular Port-of-Spain businesswoman was among persons held. Police searched her Rosalino Street, Woodbrook home and seized 200,000 bolivares and thousands of dollars in United States currency, Colombian pesos, American Express Travellers' cheques and US bank drafts. The Police also held a popular San Juan fruit dealer and his wife after reportedly seizing narcotics at an El Socorro Road, San Juan home. A Piparo man and his brother were held on charges of possession of narcotics for the purpose of trafficking, following a search of their homes at Piparo and Williamsville. The Police seized cocaine and \$12,000. Persons from Venezuela, Colombia and the Dominican Republic were reportedly held in the Cedros area on narcotics charges. They are still being questioned. The Police Commissioner explained that the raid was properly timed after he received information from the Central Intelligence Unit. Late yesterday, in operation "Big Bird," a large Police party entered the Ecclesville forest, Rio Claro, where two make-shift camps were found. The policemen destroyed 200,000 fully-grown marijuana trees and 100,000 seedlings and seized 100 pounds of cured marijuana. [Text] [Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 16 Apr 84 p 1]

NEW FARMERS BODY--A move is afoot to form an Agricultural Congress to represent the 74 organised agricultural bodies representing farmers in the country. The group behind the move is the Trinidad and Tobago Livestock Association which has invited representatives from the various organisations to take part in a first organising meeting on April 29 at 1.30 p.m. at the Lions Civic Centre, Chase Village Flyover, Chaguanas. The new body hopes to represent the interests of all agricultural organisations, at the national level. The Livestock Association resigned from the Agricultural Society recently. [Text] [Port-of-Spain TRINIDAD GUARDIAN in English 17 Apr 84 p 6]

CSO: 3298/742

PABLO AGUILAR ON AD SUPREMACY, FORMER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES

Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 9 Apr 84 p C-1

[Interview with Pedro Pablo Aguilar, national leader of the Christian Democratic Party of Venezuela, by Alfredo Pena: "AD Arrogance May Weaken Democratic Balance," 9 Apr 1984; place not specified]

[Text] The government and Democratic Action control the executive, judicial and legislative branches, the BCV [Central Bank of Venezuela], PEDEVESA [Venezuelan Petroleum, Inc], the legislatures, the Office of the Attorney General and of the Comptroller, and now they are asking for special powers for the president.

"Inside and outside COPEI circles my name is being mentioned as a COPEI candidate for 1988."

"If Montes de Oca ran for secretary general, I would give him my support."

"The AD has launched a campaign to discredit COPEI."

"My friendship with Luis Herrera does not make me responsible for the fundamental decisions of his administration."

Tomorrow President Lusinchi will introduce the bill for authorization. The head of state wants to legislate some economic, fiscal and financial matters at his discretion. The opposition will oppose the special powers that will be requested by the chief magistrate. The opposition fears that this will place pressure on indispensable parliamentary debate. The opposition fears that this will lead the Congress down the path to abdication to the executive branch.

Congressional spokesmen for the party in power have promised that these special powers will have very specific, exclusive ends. They have also stated that they will be in effect for a very limited period; long enough for the president to implement a series of statements made in his

economic speeches. What is certain is that confidence has not been regained in the country. What is certain is that we have not yet refinanced the debt. What is certain is that the cost of living has increased alarmingly. What is certain is that business and labor are in a confrontation over the Cost, Price and Wage Law.

Today "The Forum" speaks with Pedro Pablo Aguilar, national leader of the Venezuelan Christian Democratic Party.

[Question] Official spokesmen of the government and Democratic Action have accused you of having brought on the economic crisis and of looting the country. If what the AD says is true, why did COPEI organizational leaders not try to stop that disaster?

[Answer] The campaign planned and carried out by the administration and Democratic Action to morally discredit COPEI has political objectives.

[Question] The social democrats' accusations are directed more against the Herrera administration than against COPEI.

[Answer] The political objective is to strike at the party. They generalize. Gonzalo Barrios said that there were some underhanded dealings by COPEI in secret. He did not mention any particular minister, but said "members of COPEI." The effort to morally disqualify the party is closely tied to the electoral struggle in the municipalities. All this is hurting the country.

[Question] Nevertheless, it would do even more damage to keep quiet about... the excesses, corruption and poor management in government.

[Answer] The country needs to generate confidence both at home and abroad. This is indispensable for economic recovery and renegotiation of the foreign debt. I do not think that foreign investment, which is necessary in the recovery process, will be attracted to this atmosphere of scandal and reciprocal accusations. This does not mean we should keep quiet. I think that the previous administration made errors. But it should be recalled that the change of government occurred in an atmosphere that was very favorable for renegotiation. There was a surplus of 5 billion bolivars in the balance of payments; 7 percent inflation; US\$11 billion in international reserves; an ample supply.

[Question] Do you think that Democratic Action and the administration are launching a campaign--an unfounded one, you have just asserted--risking their political prestige? Don't you think the social democrats have proof of what they are saying?

[Answer] In Venezuela there is a new law that clearly establishes punishment for those who have embezzled or misappropriated public funds. If the government is convinced that members of the previous administration committed punishable acts, it is obligated to proceed against them. If this were done with sufficient evidence, there would be no resistance in either the country or in COPEI.

[Question] The accusations are not only about alleged corruption; there is talk of poor management. It is said that the country had an increase in its revenue during the Herrera administration, but that there was a large deficit in the final balance.

[Answer] The balance that Democratic Action is trying to attribute to the Herrera administration is not consonant with reality. Do not forget that a few days after the elections distinguished representatives of world banking praised the efforts made by Venezuela and anticipated that we would be able to refinance without passing under the yoke of the International Monetary Fund.

[Question] When Venezuelan politicians refer to the IMF, they talk of passing "under the yoke."

[Answer] President Lusinchi said that.

[Question] What is true is that you--the politicians--in the reciprocal accusations that have been made--have admitted that there has been squandering, waste and even theft of the funds from oil and foreign credit. With this record, how can you expect the Fund and the banks to refinance without conditions?

[Answer] That is why I have said that I do not understand why the government and Democratic Action are spurring on this game of accusations and counter-accusations. Abroad they must think there is no difference between us and the most backward country of Africa.

[Question] Exaggerations aside, the balance of payments indicates that there has been a squandering of the internal resources, which come from oil and other income, and of credits, which come from the savings of other countries whose banks have lent us millions. It is natural for creditors, in cases such as ours, to be interested in following up on their credit or refinancing.

[Answer] Venezuela, in spite of having poorly managed domestic savings and credits from the international banks, is the country that is in the best position to pay. The country has to search its conscience collectively. The ills of today are not the exclusive responsibility of the previous administration. The Venezuelan democracy should make this self-criticism with a view to making changes, but not with this kind of ping pong in which the political parties who have been in power want to keep us permanently enmeshed.

Herrera's Economic Policy

[Question] You were the secretary general of COPEI when the Herrera administration instituted its package of economic measures. Why did you not protest against the freeing of prices and the cooling of the economy which, in my opinion, had a lot to do with your defeat when you were running for reelection to that post? On the contrary, under Herrera you protested that the party should be more faithful in its relations with Miraflores.

[Answer] I have always said that whenever the party wants to criticize the administration, it should do so privately. I was very careful about that during the Caldera administration and the Herrera Campins administration. Whenever I thought it my duty to criticize, I did so in private.

[Question] If the party makes the pertinent criticisms in private, and the government does whatever it wants, should the party have to accept the public loss of face?

[Answer] This problem has been dealt with at length and has been explained by those who led the party under Herrera Campins. It is part of the overall problem of party-government relations, which has not yet been resolved in Venezuela.

[Question] Various factions of COPEI have admitted that the defeat in December was due mainly to Herrera's economic policies.

[Answer] I would agree with what Eduardo Fernandez said in the governing body: "We lost because we made mistakes in the government, in the party and in the campaign."

[Question] Eduardo Fernandez has said that Herrera's economic policies were decisive in the results of 4 December.

[Answer] That is an objective question. Clearly the elections of 4 December were linked fundamentally with economic events.

[Question] You were the secretary general when the then new economic policy of the Herrera administration was announced.

[Answer] When this was debated in La Casona, the party leaders argued very forcefully and convincingly against the statements made by the respective ministers on those measures. But the decisions were definitely made by the executive branch.

[Question] Certainly Armando Sanchez Bueno says that the government, at that time, freed up prices on the recommendation of the International Monetary Fund.

[Answer] That is not true. In reality prices were never freed. This was a term that was permitted to circulate and that became a stereotype. We only tried to stimulate the market while at the same time maintaining price controls on commodities.

[Question] You did not raise your voices when the Central Bank balances showed that capital flight was draining the national economy. Exchange controls were implemented under duress when it was already late.

[Answer] Yes, opinions were expressed, before February, in a variety of circles. It was said that certain policies, especially monetary policies, had to be corrected.

[Question] You were and still are very influential. You were a close friend of President Herrera.

[Answer] If it had been up to me, we would have instituted exchange controls much, much earlier. I was and am a friend of Luis Herrera Campins. Now, when everyone wants to beat a dead horse, I reaffirm my friendship with President Herrera. But that friendship does not make me responsible for the fundamental decisions of his administration. I think that injustices have been done to Herrera Campins and I am sure that in the future his administration will be judged differently than it is being judged by many people now.

Municipal Elections

[Question] Many people think the economic crisis had a strong impact on the election results in December. What impact will it have on the municipal elections in May?

[Answer] If we lost the elections despite Herrera's administration having kept inflation down to 7 percent and despite the other positive achievements I mentioned to you earlier, we must ask ourselves what will happen on 27 May if the economic crisis is a determinant in the elections. The government has only expressed good intentions, but it has not taken any effective measures to reactivate the economy. These announcements have paralyzed the economy; everyone is waiting to see what the government is really doing to do. Under this administration, there is an undersupply and a shortage of commodities such as milk, meat, sugar and oil. The gas price increase has aggravated the consumers' situation even further. It is sufficient to compare the price lists from just 2 months ago, under Luis Herrera, with those of today. If the voters understand that Lusinchi's administration is responsible for this situation, the outlook for Democratic Action will become very dark on 27 May. The people will notice the tremendous discrepancy between what was offered and reality.

Costs, Prices and Wages

[Question] Democratic Action has said that it will support, the Cost, Price and Wage Law with all its might. What will COPEI's position be on this?

[Answer] We have said that we do not support it because it has elements that are unconstitutional.

[Question] Do not forget that this law was already approved in the first debates in the chamber of deputies and you were in power.

[Answer] We made our thoughts known at the time. Under the Herrera Campins administration a commission was established to define cost, price and wage policies.

[Question] Precisely when that commission was formed--which did not have and does not have binding power over executive branch decisions on costs, prices and wages--Democratic Action introduced the bill that is still being

debated. The Labor Bureau and the CTV [Confederation of Venezuelan Workers] wanted and still want that law to establish a commission with decisionmaking power, not just analytical functions.

[Answer] I am afraid that this entire affair is going to expose the populist bent of the government. The government is trying to please everyone. But this is impossible, especially in an area such as this. The so-called social pact will be severely damaged by this debate. I have the clear impression that the Cost, Price and Wage Law will end up being so much flag-waving. Apparently, that way the CTV and also Fedecamaras will be satisfied. It seems possible to infer from the statements of the Democratic Action leadership that the law is not going to be binding. This is a deceitful way to resolve important public problems. If it is true that what will be approved is the same as what Luis Herrera created by decree, then there was no need for all this uproar, which only generates more distrust. The highest priority, to reestablish confidence, is receiving a severe blow.

[Question] I do not know what will finally emerge from Congress. But some measure will have to be taken because the shortage of necessities is, frankly, intolerable. Do not forget that your candidate, Rafael Caldera, promised a wage increase during his electoral campaign.

[Answer] Wages cannot be frozen because the cost of living has risen scandalously.

[Question] The CTV said, during the Herrera administration, that the real wages of the workers had fallen 60 percent.

[Answer] That was not true, of course. But now, as a result of the new administration's management, there is clearly an increase in the cost of living.

Special Powers

[Question] The government is wasting no time asking Congress for special powers.

[Answer] This is neither justifiable nor necessary. Democratic Action has a majority in both houses. Furthermore, the Legislative Committee exists to enact legislation quickly. This official policy of attempting to gain complete control over the state is disturbing. The administration and Democratic Action control the executive, legislative and judicial branches, the state legislatures, the Central Bank, PEDEVESA, and the Offices of the Comptroller and the Attorney General. Moreover, rumor has it that they will use their muscle to name the Judicial Council. How far will such arrogance go? Democracy is not just the election of leaders, and respect for freedom. Democracy, fundamentally, demands the interplay of many balances. I think that the leaders of Democratic Action themselves should reflect upon the dangers and risks to the system if this interplay of multiple balances, which is clearly the real foundation of Venezuelan democracy, is seriously upset.

The 1988 Candidacy

[Question] Pepi Montes de Oca has said that you would have to support him for the presidential candidacy in 1988. What do you say?

[Answer] In 1988 we are going to choose a presidential candidate and the candidate that the party chooses will be the candidate of all of COPEI.

[Question] And why do you support Pepi for the post of secretary general and not for the presidential candidacy?

[Answer] The party has told us to work on the municipal elections and to forget for a while about the problems of the general secretariat and the presidential candidacy. I abide by this sensible measure by our national leadership.

[Question] People say that you are a fox and a strategist and that you are backing Pepi so that he can compete with Eduardo Fernandez. In that way, if he loses the contest for secretary general, he will be virtually eliminated from the race for the presidential candidacy in 1988. Is that how you want to get Pepi out of the way?

[Answer] There are probably some who say that about me. But I am very loyal in this matter. If my colleague Montes de Oca decided to run for secretary general, he would have my support. But I am not launching his candidacy; that will be his decision.

[Question] You have said that you aspire to the COPEI presidential candidacy in 1988.

[Answer] I have differentiated between aspirations and realities. It is not that I have that aspiration, but that inside and outside COPEI circles, names are already being mentioned and mine figures among them.

[Question] In the Herrera-Pablo-Pepi factions the names being mentioned are yours and that of Pepi Montes de Oca.

[Answer] You want me to violate the express norms of the electoral commission, which is run by someone for whom I have great respect, Director Moros Gherisi.

[Question] Didn't the municipal primaries demonstrate the supremacy of the Caldero-Eduardo factions?

[Answer] Those elections were not a means for measuring the power of the factions. That is why we decided in the national committee not to vote for tickets but for individuals, candidates. A magnificent test that could be applied in the elections for our representatives and for the candidate in 1988.

MONTES DE OCA ON NEED TO FORM COPEI COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 9 Apr 84 p 2-1

[Article by Jorge Villalba]

[Text] Rafael Andres Montes de Oca will propose to the COPEI [Social Christian Party] National Committee the creation of a party commission to investigate charges of alleged acts of corruption committed during the administration of Luis Herrera Campins.

According to spokespersons close to the former interior relations minister, he is extremely disturbed by the position taken by the green-banner party in regard to the campaign of accusations against COPEI party activists who held important posts during the previous administration.

As is known, until now COPEI has declined to take a stand on these charges and has urged the former officials involved to defend themselves.

It was possible to establish that in Montes de Oca's eyes this position is said to be very convenient and to lack solidarity. This is because even though there may have been some irregularities in some public agencies that should be investigated, in other cases the attacks have a clear political purpose.

The former minister is also said to have noted that the stance currently being taken by the Christian Social Party leadership in regard to the campaign of accusations contrasts openly with the position taken in other cases. For example, when there was an attack on Jose Curiel during the BTV affair, the national committee came wholeheartedly to his defense.

It would seem then, remarked the spokesperson, that there is discrimination by the Christian Social leadership, since when the accused belong to the Caldero faction, they are "absolved a priori." However, if they belong to the Herrera faction, they are left to fend for themselves.

For this reason Montes de Oca is said to have decided to bring the problem for once and for all before the national leadership so that it will be the party itself that investigates the charges and takes a stand on each and every case, regardless of any investigations that may be conducted by the legal bodies.

The former interior relations minister, it seems, is convinced that an attempt is being made to settle accounts with the Herrera faction and that it would be very serious if, with this objective in mind, a kind of "plot" were even hatched with the participation not only of members of AD but also of COPEI in order to find a few "scapegoats."

In this regard he allegedly said that although no fingers have been pointed specifically at him, there have been efforts to make it look like he is surrounded by front men, who are supposedly among his friends. This, in his opinion, is very curious since no other politician has had a finger pointed at him publicly for having friends who are well off. Nor much less has anyone else been publicly accused of using intermediaries to hide some kind of illicit gain.

For all of these reasons, Montes de Oca will face the charges against him both inside COPEI and before public opinion, even if this means temporarily setting aside the possibility of launching his candidacy for the post of secretary general of the green-banner party.

Accordingly, he will propose the creation of an investigative commission in COPEI. It will be a kind of party court of ethics composed of impartial individuals. He is even willing, it seems, to request the Office of the Comptroller General of the republic to carry out an investigation of his capital assets and activities.

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